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BY

J. EMERSON TENNENT, ESQ., M.P.

AUTHOR OF "LETTERS FROM THE ÆGEAN," AND "HISTORY OF MODERN GREECE."

3.h.18

"L'UNION FAIT LA FORCE."—MOTTO OF BELGIUM.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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CONTENTS

OF THE

SECOND VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

The Palaces of Brussels—Palace of the Prince of Orange —Embarrassment of the government respecting it —Description of the interior—*Chambers of the Belgian legislature*—Palais de la Nation—Constitution of Belgium—Variable franchise—Removal of the picture of Waterloo—THE PARK—Singular scenes of the revolution—Curious account of the adventures of an English party at the Hôtel de Bellevue during the riots at Brussels—*Works of the Société du Renard*

Page

at Brussels — The road to Antwerp — Villas—Old châteaux—House of Rubens and Teniers—The vilage of Vieux Dieux—Appearance of the country — *The tower of the cathedral* — Fortifications — Narrow streets—Palace of Napoleon—The houses — *History of Antwerp*—Festival of the ladies' eve —Immense commerce in the sixteenth century—Closing of the Scheldt in 1648—Projects of Napoleon for Antwerp—Arsenal and locks —*Trade from* 1815 *to* 1830—Affected by the revolution—Transit trade of Belgium—Absurd system of competition with Holland—RUBENS—Fêtes in his honour—Modern painters—*Verboeckhoven*—*The Museum*—Rubens' genius—The Crucifixion—The adoration of the Magi —Vandyke—*The cathedral*—View from the tower—Crucifix made from the statue of Alva—Monument of Quentin Metsys—Interior of the church—*Rubens' Descent from the Cross*—The tomb of Rubens in the Church of St. Jacques—*Church of St. Paul*—The Calvary and Purgatory—Aspect of a Roman Catholic place of worship—A lady of Antwerp at vespers—*St. Andrews' Church*—Superb pulpit—Monument to Mary Queen of Scotland—Dinner with M. David—Want of carpets in continental houses—THE CITADEL — Extraordinary scene — General Chassé—The patriot army—The singular history of its three commanders—The bombardment—Places at the theatre to see the siege. . . .

CHAPTER II.

Page

Quays of Antwerp—Peculiar mode of training young trees—The Scheldt—The flying bridge of Napoleon —Story of Van Speyk—Polder at the Tête de Flandres—Its catastrophe in 1837—Zwyndrecht—*Different professions of the Belgian saints*—Story of the curate of St. Joachim—Beveren—*St. Nicholas* —Dense population—A market—Flemish ballad-singers—Ancient drama of Flanders—Tamise—RUINOUS CONDITION OF THE COTTON TRADE *in Belgium since the revolution*—Its causes—Inability of the government to afford relief—Diminution of exports since 1833—Remarkable petition of the trade to the legislature—Remedies suggested by them—Impracticability of any commercial union with France —Or the Zoll-Verein—*Dendermonde*—Siege by the Duke of Marlborough—Description of its present state—Its manufactures—MECHLIN—Curious old city—The Archbishop Sterckx—A political prelate—Mechlin lace—Flax—The Cathedral of St. Romoald —The tower—Carillon—Immense bells—The corporation of Mechlin—*The tomb of the Bartholdi*—Van Eyck's paintings—*Vandyke's Crucifixion*—Superiority of Rubens in composition—*Church of Notre-Dame* —"The miraculous draught of fishes"—Favourite paintings of Rubens in the Church of St. John—Hôtel de St. Jaques. 80

CHAPTER III.

Page

Scenery around Louvain—*The Belgian railroad system*—Peculiar adaptation of the country—Policy of Government interference in their construction—The average cost per mile—Causes of the difference in outlay between Belgium and England—Cheap rates of travelling in Belgium—*Accidents*—Success not yet decided—Louvain—Its extent—THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUVAIN—Its former fame—Its present condition—The bierre de Louvain—*The great brewery*—Its processes—Amazing consumption of beer in Belgium—Its different characters—*The Hôtel de Ville*—Its pictures—Gallery of M. Vanderschreick—The collegiate church of St. Pierre—*Legend of Saint Margaret of Louvain*—Tomb of Justus Lipsius—Flight of the "braves Belges" at Louvain in 1832—Singular change in the character of the people for courage—The present soldiery—*Terveuren*—The park and palace of the Prince of Orange—*The Forest of Soigné*—WATERLOO—The Belgic Lion—Its injury to the field—Irish anecdote—Bravery of the Irish troops at Waterloo—*Hougemont*—The orchard—Relics of the fight—The Duke of Wellington's estate—No monument to him on the field—The Duke of Marlborough—La Belle Alliance—*Quatre Bras*—The woods cut down—Beautiful scenery of the Meuse and the Sambre—NAMUR—My Uncle Toby—The citadel—Don John of Austria—The cathedral—*The*

Page

church of St. Loup—The trade in cutlery—THE DESCENT OF THE MEUSE—Its beauty and its wealth —Andennes—*History of Mr. Cockerill*—His influence on the manufactures of Belgium—*His print-works at Andennes*—Ruined by the revolution—*The manufacture of paper in Belgium*—Huy . . . 117

CHAPTER IV.

Huy—The citadel—Churches—*The mineral and coal districts of Belgium*—Prosperity of coal mines—Quantity produced in Belgium compared with other countries—Its price at Ghent, Brussels, and Antwerp —Panic in 1836 for the exhaustion of coal in Belgium —Scenery of the Meuse—Remarkable individuals born in its vicinity—Chateaux of Aigremont and Chokier—*Seraing*—Immense extent of the works— Its produce within its own walls—History of the establishment—Palace of the Prince Bishops of Liege —Encouraged by the King of Holland—The building—Huge steam engine—Surprising extent of the operations carried on—Iron works—Halls for construction of machines—Vast numbers of workmen employed—Its exports—*Mr. John Cockerill*—Extent of his speculations—Development of Seraing attributable to them—Its future prospects—Policy of England in regard to the export of machinery—*Importation of machinery into Belgium*—Road to Liege

Page

—LIEGE—No sympathy with its history—Turbulent and unamiable character of its ancient populace—Prince Bishop declares war upon France—Share of the Liegois in the revolution of 1830—Her threatened attack upon Seraing—The town—*Manufacture of fire-arms and cannon*—A flax mill—Its churches poor—The Palais de Justice—University—*Scenery of the Vesdre*—The railroad—*Chaud-fontaine*—SPA—Deserted—VERVIERS—The town—Conduct during the revolution—*The woollen trade of Belgium*—Want of native wool—Extent and decline of the trade—Its causes—Statement of M. Briavionne—*Joint Stock Companies* in Belgium—Account of two at Verviers—The mania for speculation—Its failure—The Prussian frontier—Limbourg—Prospects of Belgium—Her bad condition—Policy of the King of Holland—That of the present government—Present aspect of their trade—Impossibility of competing with England—Character of the Belgian mechanics—*Ruinous effects of the* "REPEAL OF THE UNION." . . 166

CHAPTER V.

Change in the aspect of the country in crossing the frontier from Belgium into Prussia—Passports, no real inconvenience—Anecdote of a Jamaica planter—First view of AIX-LA-CHAPELLE—Its population and employments—*Insurrection of the Patriots in* 1830—Its absurd termination—The Cathedral of

Page

Charlemagne—Its architecture—Donation of Mary Queen of Scots—THE TOMB OF CHARLEMAGNE —His singular mode of interment—The relics in the Treasury — The Redoute — Gaming discountenaced in Prussia—*The Hotel de Ville*—Statue and fountain of Charlemagne—Environs of Aix agreeable—Political condition of the Trans-Rhenan province of Prussia—*Excellent posting arrangements* —Improvement suggested in England—Aspect of the country to Juliers—JULIERS—*Neuss*—Trade in crushing oil might be advantageously introduced in Ireland—The church of St. Quirinus—The Rhine . 219

BELGIUM.

CHAPTER I.

BRUSSELS—ANTWERP.

The Palaces of Brussels—Palace of the Prince of Orange—Embarrassment of the government respecting it—Description of the interior—*Chambers of the Belgian legislature*—Palais de la Nation—Constitution of Belgium—Variable franchise—Removal of the picture of Waterloo—The Park—Singular scenes of the revolution—Curious account of the adventures of an English party at the Hôtel de Bellevue during the riots at Brussels—*Works of the Société du Renard at Brussels*—The road to Antwerp—Villas—Old châteaux—House of Rubens and Teniers—The village of Vieux Dieux—Appearance of the country—*The tower of the cathedral*—Fortifications—Narrow streets—Palace of Napoleon—The houses—*History of Antwerp*—Festival of the ladies' eve—Immense commerce in the sixteenth century—Closing of the Scheldt in 1648—Projects of Napoleon for Antwerp—Arsenal and locks

—*Trade from* 1815 *to* 1830—Affected by the revolution—Transit trade of Belgium—Absurd system of competition with Holland—RUBENS—Fêtes in his honour—Modern painters—*Verboeckhoven*—*The Museum*—Rubens' genius—The Crucifixion—The adoration of the Magi—Vandyke—*The cathedral*—View from the tower—Crucifix made from the statue of Alva—Monument of Quentin Metsys—Interior of the church—*Rubens' Descent from the Cross*—The tomb of Rubens in the Church of St. Jacques—*Church of St. Paul*—The Calvary and Purgatory—Aspect of a Roman Catholic place of worship—A lady of Antwerp at vespers—*St. Andrews' Church*—Superb pulpit—Monument to Mary Queen of Scotland—Dinner with M. David—Want of carpets in continental houses—THE CITADEL—Extraordinary scene—General Chassé—The patriot army—The singular history of its three commanders—The bombardment—Places at the theatre to see the siege.

THE palaces of Brussels, which we have been visiting to-day are two; that of the King is a heavy looking building, which was formerly two houses separated by a street, which have now been united, and patched up into one residence, more remarkable for solidity than beauty. It contains, however, some splendid rooms, especially a grand ball-room for state occasions, and a few paintings of high excellence.

Close by it, is that of the Prince of Orange, which has been a source of much embarrassment to the Belgian government. It was erected for the Prince out of a fund, voted for the purpose by the nation in recognition of his military services at Waterloo; and it was furnished, I think, in part, at least, at his own charge. But the whole was barely completed when the Revolution of 1830 drove the Prince, whom the people so recently delighted to honor, from his domains and his newly acquired house.

What was now to be done with the palace! Could the people who had so recently conferred it on him wrest it back? Had the Prince of Orange been King, the case would have been different, but he was still no more than a private gentleman, during the life time of his father. He was not personally responsible for any political offences charged against the crown, and the confiscation of his property would, therefore, have been an act of private wrong. Still there was not wanting a party among the *esprits forts* of the Revolution, to urge

its appropriation to the purposes of the state. On the other hand, the Prince naturally indignant at the expulsion of his family, hesitated to take any steps for the removal of his property, and the entire of the gorgeous furniture, both of this palace and another at Treveuren on the borders of the Forest of Soignies, given to him under the same circumstances, and at the same time, by the nation, were left behind untouched, but by no means abandoned, as they were still under the charge of his domestics and agents.

Perhaps, too, in addition to the national unwillingness of the Prince by the breaking up of his establishment, to avow his consciousness of the utter hopelessness of the family ever retrieving their lost position; he may have felt that his deserted palace, with all its portraits, statues, busts and paintings, its sumptuous decorations and elegant and refined bijouterie, left as he had last used them, apparently, in all the hurry and alarm of flight, would be a desirable memento to leave behind him to

the party who still sighed for the restoration of his house. And that on this consideration, he was in no haste to make any new disposition of it.

Be it as it may, however, the palace and all its contents remained under the protection of the Belgian government, though in the actual custody of the Prince's servants, down to the final ratification of the treaty for the independence of Belgium in 1839, and visitors were admitted to its sumptuous apartments on obtaining an order from the minister of finance. That formal abandonment, however, by Holland, of every recognized claim upon its sequestrated dominions, left the Prince of Orange no further pretext for the apparent desertion of his property, and within the last few weeks, the contents of the palace have been in process of removal to the Hague. The books, the paintings and bijouterie are already gone, and the rest of the furniture is speedily to follow, so that, at present, the only objects to be seen, are the hangings of embroidered silk and velvet,

the superb ormolu candelabra in the ball room, the gilded chairs, and almost priceless tables of lapis lazuli and malachite, one of which has been estimated, I know not how correctly, at 500,000 francs, and another at three times that sum. They were presents from the Emperor of Russia to his sister the Princess of Orange, together with the slabs of Siberian granite, with which the walls of some of the magnificent saloons are encased, and which is of extraordinary whiteness and beauty.

The exterior of this really superb residence, for it is too small to correspond with our ideas of the magnitude of a palace, is utterly unworthy of its matchless contents and internal decorations, but both taken together, are said to have cost upwards of twenty millions of francs, and before its dismantlement, it was beyond all comparison or question, the most recherché mansion in Europe. Perhaps the most interesting apartments are those of the Princess, consisting of the usual bedrooms, baths, boudoir, library, and reception

rooms, all of which remained undisturbed as their illustrious occupant had left them, when setting out on that journey to the Hague, whence she little imagined she was never again to return to Brussels. Her books and drawings still lay upon the table, her writing materials and some papers on the portfolio beside them, and all the charming little nic-nacs of the boudoir still remained undisturbed from the disposition in which her own hand had last arranged them. It is not possible that the sympathy which even a foreigner feels on a visit to such a spot, should not have been warmly shared by a large proportion of the Belgians themselves, with these interesting souvenirs perpetually before them. I presume the palace will still be left open for the public; and even if divested of its more luxurious ornaments, its marble walls, rich ceilings, and floors of costly marqueterie, will still render it the bijou of Brussels.

The building in which the Belgian parliament holds its sittings, is situated in the same square, on the side opposite to

that occupied by the royal palace. It is a large, Grecian edifice, with a considerable quantity of sculpture and architectural decoration externally, but within, its passages and chambers have almost a republican simplicity and absence of ornament. The main edifice itself is not new, having been erected by Maria Theresa, for the ancient Conseil de Brabant—it now bears the commodious name of the *Palais de la Nation.* Adjoining it, in the Rue de la Loi, the Downing Street of Brussels, are the official residences and offices of the ministers of finances and public works, and the home and foreign secretaries of state.

The entrance hall is a very large and low vestibule, paved with dove-coloured marble, communicating with two staircases, which lead to the chambers of the commons and the senate. In conformity with the anti-aristocratic spirit of the constitution, which declares the equality of all orders, the chamber of the upper house has nothing in its furniture to distinguish it from the lower, except, indeed, that the

latter is by far the larger and more handsome apartment of the two. That of the senate is a moderate sized square room, with a green table surrounded by chairs. That of the commons is a semi-circle, lighted from above, surrounded by columns which support the roof, and fitted up with benches covered with green morocco, with conveniences for paper and writing materials before each member, and in front of these is the chair of the President, and the tribune to which each orator advances in succession to address the house. It is in the latter chamber that the King opens and closes, in person, the sittings of the Assembly, at the commencement and end of each session.

Instead of the anomalous hours and seasons of the British Parliament, those of the Belgian Assemblies are in winter, and at mid-day, and its discussions open to the public, with a power invested in any ten members, to demand a vote of the Chamber for the exclusion of strangers during any particular debate. The secretaries at the table, are

members of the House, and take share in its proceedings. The number of representatives is regulated by the amount of population, in the proportion of one member for every 40,000 inhabitants; and that of the senate is *one half* the number of the other House. The latter are chosen for eight years, and the former for four, and the elections take place for the senate every fourth year, when one half retire, and for the commons, every second. The qualification of a senator, is the payment of 1,000 florins a-year of direct taxes, whilst that of a representative is only two hundred, or about £10. The members of the lower House receive each 200 florins a-month, during the sitting of the house; a distinction is conferred on the members of the upper of having neither pay nor perquisites. The ministers have seats in both assemblies, and a right to be heard in their discussions, should they require to speak, but no power to vote in the divisions; either chamber may, also, require their presence and explanations if essential to its deliberations.

The *elective* franchise, I forgot to state, varies in amount in the different provinces, but in all it requires the elector to be twenty-five years of age, and by birth or naturalization, a Belgian. A distinction is also made between the electors of the towns and the peasants of the same province who vote for the same member. Thus, for the province of Antwerp, the elector for the city must pay, as his qualification, eighty florins of direct taxes, annually, whilst the peasant is only required to pay thirty. In Brussels and Ghent, the sum is the same as in Antwerp; in Liege, it is seventy florins; in Bruges, sixty; in Courtrai, fifty; and in Ostend, forty, down to thirty-five for some of the smaller city constituencies. The scale seems to be regulated, throughout, in proportion to the agricultural or commercial reputation of the electoral district; Luxembourg and Namur, for instance, are the lowest in the list, and their peasantry pay but twenty florins, or something less than twenty shillings a-year; whilst in Limbourg, the qualification is

twenty-five, and thirty in each of the other six provinces of the kingdom.

The lower chamber was, till lately, decorated with two paintings of the battles of Nieuport and Waterloo. In the latter, the principal figure was that of the Prince of Orange, at the moment of his receiving his wound in the action. This unhappy painting seems to have been a source of some embarrassment—to keep such a conspicuous memento of the expelled dynasty, and that, too, recording its strongest claim upon the gratitude of the nation; and, above all, to leave it suspended in the very midst of the revolutionary leaders, must have been peculiarly awkward. But then, this objection did not extend to the battle of Nieuport—one of the most decisive victories of the patriots over the Spaniards in the war of liberation, and to take down the one without the other would have looked peevish. The difficulty seems, however, to have been surmounted, for we found them both gone; and that of Waterloo, we saw in a back apartment, awaiting, perhaps, its

removal to some still more secluded depository.

The Park, which forms the centre of the square, which is flanked by these public buildings, is the favourite promenade of the Bruxellois—the Tuilleries' garden of their little Paris, and, in fact, it is *a garden*, its dimensions being too small to merit its more dignified title. Without being either Dutch or cockney, it contains as many varieties of ornament as could well be disposed of in so small a space—broad green slopes, tall trees and shaded walks, with fountains, busts and statues in abundance. Within the gardens, there is a miniature theatre and a café, and a ball-room, called La Salle du Wauxhall, and in summer, a military band plays during the evening promenade. This little "pleasance" was, in 1830, the focus of the revolutionary riot, where the Dutch troops, under the command of Prince Frederick, made their unfortunate entry into the city, and after an interval of carnage and incendiarism, retired, without a demonstration of their

strength, or a vigorous effort to crush the revolt. The houses and trees still bear traces of these sanguinary "three days," the latter having their wounds still bound up with plates of lead and iron nailed over the spots which were torn by the balls.

The scene which this now peaceful spot presented on the morning after the departure of the Dutch troops, is thus described by an eye witness. "In the park, the statues, trees, gates, and ornaments were shattered or defaced; the walks, alleys, and hollows were strewed with fragments of fire-arms, gun-carriages, weapons, and military equipments. Here the mangled bodies of dead horses obstructed the path; there lay a still palpitating, half-stripped corpse, and beside them a dozen others, barely covered with a few hands-full of earth or leaves. Ensanguined and discoloured streaks marked the trace where some wounded victim had dragged himself from the scene of combat; and deep indentures in the sand, with dark coagulated pools, covered by myriads of insects, indicated the spots where other

gallant men had made their last death struggle."*

In the very midst of this scene of commotion and carnage, the Hôtel de Bellevue, the favourite resort of the English, was occupied, at the moment, by a party of our fellow countrymen, and a few females of distinction. In a pamphlet which I picked up at Brussels, published at the period, I found the following graphic detail of the siege which they sustained—a chapter of real romance, such as occurs in the lives of but few of the generations of tourists who annually swarm in Brussels. It professes to be written by an English officer, who was one of the party.

"When the King's troops commenced the attack on Brussels, on the morning of the 23d., the English in the Hôtel de Bellevue consisted of Lady Charles Bentinck, niece to the Duke of Wellington, and two daughters, the eldest about thirteen, Mr. and Mrs. George Harley Drummond, Mrs.

* White's Belgic Revolution, vol. ii. p. 10.

and Miss Wolseley, (an interesting girl), Captains Dent and Sibbourn, and their respective servants. The cannonading had scarcely begun near the Schræbeck gate, when Captains Dent and Sibbourn hurried to the boulevards, behind the palace of the Prince of Orange, to observe, if possible, the advance of the troops, and to see a nine-pounder belonging to the bourgeois pointed and served. In a few minutes, however, they heard the grape-shot rattling in the trees over their heads, which induced them to return to the hotel, when, just as they were turning the corner of the house, a shell burst within a few yards of them. This sufficed to show, that on the part of the troops, the most hostile dispositions had been determined on. Shells and grape-shot were thrown in abundance from the rising ground outside the gate of Schærbeck, along the Rue Royale, towards the Place Royale.. From the hotel, we had a good view of the advance of the troops, who were received by a brisk fire from the bourgeois, who occupied houses on each side of the street,

and who made great havoc amongst the military; but the latter, by dint of superior numbers, were not long in reaching the park, which the bourgeois had, most unfortunately for themselves, and most unaccountably, neglected to occupy. They rushed through the park, and took possession of the King's palace, which was also unoccupied. Rapid, however, as was this success, they were never able, during the four day's fighting, to proceed in this direction, and all their attempts to gain the Place Royale proved fruitless, notwithstanding the very brisk fire they incessantly kept up against the burghers. It is a curious fact, that not more than about two hundred of the latter were upon the Place Royale, when repeated attacks were made upon it by the military, but they had three or four nine-pounders remarkably well served.

With a view to take possession of these guns, a party of not more than forty lancers, advanced along that part of the Hôtel de Bellevue facing the park; but they had scarcely reached the corner, and got into

the fire, when they faced about, and hastily retreated as far as the King's palace. A sharp fire of both cannon and small arms now commenced, which continued without interruption until the final retreat of the troops. The situation of the English ladies in the Hôtel de Bellevue became very critical at this moment. We had all removed to a room on the second floor, facing the Place Royale, but some of the burghers having entered the house, commenced firing from the roof, which naturally drew upon the building the fire from the troops.

The rapid succession of shots from and against the hotel, and the constant fire of artillery close to its gates, with the shouting of the people, were enough to intimidate the stoutest female heart. We found it absolutely necessary to take the ladies to a lower part of the house more under cover, though in descending the great staircase, they became exposed to a sharp fire of musketry. However, we succeeded in getting them safe down. The place of refuge was the cook's garde-manger, a sort of cellar,

on a line with, but a few steps lower than the kitchen. Being vaulted and under ground, we remained there in comparative safety until the afternoon of Saturday the 25th. The ladies gradually became accustomed to the noise of the fire over their heads, and as two of them were naturally of a very lively turn of mind, the cellar presented occasionally a scene of hilarity, fun, and good humour, which strongly contrasted with the more frequent one of alarm, fear, and despondency. It must not be supposed that the ladies were confined prisoners during the whole time in the cellar; curiosity prevailed, even at the risk of life, and there was many a creep up stairs to gain a peep at the scene without. At the same time, it would be unjust to attribute this motive to one lady, Mrs. Drummond, whose kind heart and genuine philanthrophy induced her to visit the wounded whom they were constantly bringing into the hall, and to render every assistance in her power to those brave fellows who

though in agony, silently but significantly expressed their gratitude.

> "Oh woman in our hours of ease,
> Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
> And variable as the shade
> By the light quivering aspin made,
> When pain and anguish wring the brow
> A minist'ring angel thou."

Mrs. Drummond had a wonderful escape. Before she quitted her apartments at the commencement of the attack upon the town, shots passed through them, and in a few minutes afterwards they were filled with all kinds of projectiles: one ball in particular lodged itself on the fair lady's pillow. In the afternoon of the second day of the battle, a Belgic gentleman and his family entered the cellar where they made good their quarters, having been previously staying in another part of the hotel nearer the King's palace. There was something in this man's appearance so disagreeable, that none of us felt disposed to give him a a very cordial reception, and the result

proved that we were by no means unworthy disciples of Lavater. About the middle of Saturday (the third day) a Liegois chief came into the cellar evidently with a view to reconnoitre the party, when Mrs. Drummond, by one of those sudden impulses which seem to belong more to the secret workings of an all-directing providence, than to spring solely from human foresight, extended her hand to him, and begged him to embrace her, intimating at the same time that she trusted to him for protection. The chief nobly replied that with his life he would defend her, and shortly afterwards left the cellar. The kiss thus bestowed upon the cheek of this man, dirty and black as he was from the thick of the fight, was indeed a most lucky one for us, as it was certainly the means of saving the lives of the whole of our party both ladies and gentlemen. In three or four hours afterwards, there was more than usual bustle and noise in the house, in consequence of the burghers having occupied it in still greater force, and brought one of their guns into

the yard, ready, upon the opening of a gate, to pour grape shot upon the troops immediately opposite in the park. It was at this moment also, that the Belgic gentleman hastily entered the cellar, and desired his family to follow him as quick as possible. He had scarcely reached the front gate, when the same Liegois chief above mentioned seized him as his prisoner. In fact he was a traitor, and had been strongly suspected by the burghers of giving provisions during the night to some officers of the royal troops through one of the gates facing the park. Certainly, many circumstances which it is needless to detail, tended to convince us that these suspicions were but too well founded. Had the burghers rushed into the cellar, there can be no doubt, considering the highly exasperated state they were in, that we should all have fallen victims to their rage. Another Liegois chief has since told me that having taken compassion upon this Belgic family, he used every exertion to restrain the fury of the burghers, and succeeded in conducting

them to the Hôtel de Ville ; still they were very roughly handled, and the mother and daughter (a beautiful girl of seventeen), were completely covered with mud which had been thrown at them. There were now many indications of a most desperate conflict in and about the hotel, and as our staying any longer there, seemed to subject us to the imminent risk of being massacred by the infuriated Dutch should they gain possession of the building, or of being buried in its ruins, should it be battered down, or set on fire, it became necessary to take some decided steps. The master of the hotel appeared to be much agitated. He had become a marked man from his having casually harboured the traitor, and from other circumstances. I shall never forget the style in which Lady C. Bentinck addressed him at this moment. She seemed to be fired with the spirit and decision of her illustrious uncle, and insisted upon the master giving his true opinion whether it was safer to quit, or to remain in the house. He declined for some time to give an opi-

nion either way, but at last told her she had better go. Lady Bentinck instantly decided upon leaving, and the whole party agreed to follow her example. When in the act of preparing to depart, five or six armed burghers entered the cellar and offered to escort us to a place of greater safety. They had evidently been sent by the Liegois chief. The party now left the cellar: arrived at the gate, some little hesitation being shown, the Liegois chief whispered to Mrs. Drummond "*Vite vite, Madame.*" We sallied out, Lady Bentinck with her daughters leading the way. Captain Sibbourn with Mrs. Wollesley on one side and Miss Wollesley on the other were the next; behind them were Captain Dent and Mrs. Drummond, followed by Mr. Drummond and his little boy, the whole party being escorted by six burghers. The latter having conducted us along the Place Royale as far as the church, desired us to cross the Place with them as quickly possible, as we had now to pass through a very heavy fire of grape shot and musketry. It was a most trying moment for the

poor women, who could distinctly hear the shots whizzing past them. When we had got into the most exposed part of the Place, Mrs. Wollesley fell down, and it was quite impossible for Captain Sibbourn to get her on, as her daughter on his other arm was on the point of fainting at the sight of her mother on the ground. But two or three of the brave burghers, thinking the poor lady was wounded, ran forward from the cover under which they were firing, and carried her on their shoulders. It was quite a miracle that not one of the party was touched by a shot. The burghers having thus got us through the principal danger, conducted us by bye ways and back lanes to a house of great safety where we remained until the next morning, when we were obliged to go still further off, and to break up the party by securing such apartments as we could obtain in different hotels lower down in the town."

* * * *

We went to-day to see another of the great machine manufactories of Belgium,

the works of *La Société du Renard*, which are the property of a joint stock company, who purchased them from their original proprietor. Though on a vast scale, they are by no means so extensive as the Phœnix at Ghent; they are calculated for the production of every description of machinery, but chiefly of locomotive engines, and the heavier articles. The establishment is fitted up for five hundred workmen, but at the time of our visit, it had not employment for more than fifty. The chief apartment is one spacious workshop nearly square, covered in, and so extensive, as to be traversed by a railway for the convenience of moving the heavier pieces. The directors had no orders in hand at the moment, but were preparing some locomotives upon speculation. The cost of one of these of thirty horse power, is about 40,000 francs.*

* The price of their heavy metal castings, is fifteen francs per cwt.; and lighter ones, twenty francs; millwork twenty-two to twenty-five francs. The workmen are all Belgians and receive on an average two francs to three and a half per day. All the tools in use are English. Their power is one of Wolf's engines of twenty-five horse power, consuming

I cannot but fear, that these large establishments have been inconsiderately run up in Belgium, and that the recent demand for machinery, both for railroads and factories, has given a hectic air of prosperity to Belgian manufactures, that has led to investments of this kind, far beyond her real wants. Even at present we find an universal protestation, that the quantity of machinery already in action, is more than sufficient to supply all the demands of her trade. At Ghent, we found the Phœnix works fully employed, a circumstance obviously accounted for, by the simultaneous erection of three joint stock spinning mills, but we were told, on the spot, that when the orders for these were completed, it was not clearly discernible whence others of similar importance were to come. In other parts of Belgium, the same diminution of employment is seriously felt, and the Renard is, as I have stated, almost at a stand still. The railroads of Belgium, when once supplied

eight lbs. of coal, per horse power. Coals from Charleroi cost twenty-seven francs per ton for large pieces.

with engines, cannot possibly be expected to keep so many and so extensive works in regular employment, and even now I observed under a shed at the station of Ghent, two English locomotive engines from Newcastle, neither of which had yet been used, but which were laid aside as a reserve. The capital sunk in the Renard, is said to be 700,000 francs, and besides it, there are three minor houses of the same kind in Brussels.

Except some print works, bleach-greens, and others connected with the cotton trade, Brussels cannot be said to have any manufactures of importance. The carpets which bear its name, are all woven at Tournai, but the competition of England, has seriously interfered with them in the production of the ordinary articles, the importation of which into Belgium has increased since 1830, from the value of twenty thousand francs, to one hundred and thirty thousand annually. But in those articles which are more peculiarly incidental to a capital, carriages, musical instruments, jewellery, and

furniture, the reputation of Brussels stands deservedly high. The carriages, especially, which one sees in Brussels, are remarkable for their elegance and substantial finish. The public conveyances also, the fiacres and vigilantes are superior to those of any city I know on the continent. It is remarkable, however, that in common with every other handicraft, the coach-makers of Belgium are complaining of depression, there were eighteen establishments of this kind in Brussels in 1838, of whom one half only were to be found in 1839.*

One most flourishing branch of trade in Brussels, is that of books; and more especially of reprints of French and foreign literature, with which it plentifully supplies almost every country of Europe. The value of the volumes thus produced annually, is estimated at upwards of *six millions* of francs, of which *two millions*, at least, are for contrefaçons of foreign literature. In point of price they are much below that of France, notwithstanding that their paper is more

* Briavionne, v. 2, p. 474.

expensive, nor is cheapness their only recommendation, their typographical beauty is of the highest order, and some of their *éditions de luxe*, illustrated by wood-cuts, and arabesques are in every way equal to those of Paris, and much superior to any attempts hitherto made in England, where the hardness of our sized paper, prevents the engravings from delivering a rich impression, and our pressmen accustomed only to work with it, want that delicacy of hand, which is essential to use the soft and spungy paper of the French and Belgians.

* * * * *

The railroad took us to Antwerp, a distance of thirty-four miles, in something more than an hour and a half. As usual the country lay as level as a bowling-green, and now and then the line of the railway intersecting the old paved highway, shewed on either side a vista of elms and poplars, as straight as the flight of an arrow, and so long that no opening was discernible in the distant perspective: occasionally we flew past some Dutch looking country box, with its red roof and whitened walls, its clipped

hedges and grave looking garden, with parterres of sunflowers and dahlias; and here and there a grim little château, surrounded at each angle by a turret, like a pepper-box, and covered by a tiled roof, as tall and as sharp as the peaked hat of a burgomaster, seated in a coppice of alders and firs, and looking as primitive and secluded as if the railroad were the first visitant that had broken in upon its retirement from time immemorial. One of these pompous little manor houses, at some distance from the road between Malines and Brussels, was a residence of Rubens; and another called the Dry Thoren or Three Towers, not far from it at Perck, was the property of Teniers. The intention of the great perpendicularity in the roofs, in the Low Countries, was to prevent the lodgment of snow in their severe winters, and in the towns where building ground was so extremely valuable, to obtain rooms for storing fuel and other bulky articles, without trenching upon the space below.

The road between Malines and Antwerp,

passes through the hamlet of Rosendael, (the Vale of Roses) where there was formerly a rich abbey of Cistercian monks. Duffill, a small manufacturing town, and a village bearing the remarkable name of *Vieux Dieu*, from a pagan temple, which is said to have been erected there at some remote period, and the site of which is pointed out in a clump of elms, a "sacred grove," within which an altar is still erected on the occasion of any religious procession in the parish. Approaching Antwerp, the surface of the land becomes more uneven, much of it has been recovered from the rivers which traverse it, and is sunk in deep rich *polders*, which the roads traverse upon raised causeways. The agricultural toil seemed here to be extensively shared by the women, who were busied in its most laborious processes.

The first feature of Antwerp is the soaring and majestic tower of its Cathedral, springing from three to four hundred feet above the level plain. Beyond any comparison, this is the most chaste and beau-

tiful steeple I have ever seen, its extraordinary height between three and four hundred feet, being less surprising than its airy and graceful lightness. It tapers up arch above arch, not in solid masonry, but pierced with innumerable openings, through which the clear blue sky is seen through the gothic net-work of its minarets and spandrils. It was of this handsome spire, that Charles V. said, it should be preserved under glass, and Napoleon with more vraisemblance, observed, that it reminded him of *Mechlin lace*. The entrance to the city, by the Porte de Borgerhout, gives a striking impression of its great strength, its fortifications rising in huge mounds of brickwork, above broad and river-like fosses, and the road after passing draw-bridge after draw-bridge entering a ponderous arch, apparently hollowed out of the ramparts, on emerging from which the wheels rattle and re-echo over the rough pavement of the narrow gloomy streets, that lead into the heart of the city.

Its appearance is like that of all the

other ancient fortified towns of the Low Countries, where the circuit of the city, being girt in and determined by the line of the walls, the necessity of economizing space led to the construction of gloomy passages, and lofty houses that overshadow the street, and keep the sun from ever shining upon the pavement. Towards the centre of the town, however, there are some ample streets, and a lively square, the *Place Vert*, planted with trees and surrounded on all sides by hotels, cafés, and modern houses of great elegance. In the *Place de Mer*, there is a spacious mansion, surmounted by the royal arms, which is dignified with the name of a palace, but was merely the mansion of a merchant of Antwerp, and was purchased by Napoleon, as a residence for himself and his marshals, on their temporary visits to the city. It is still retained for the same purpose by King Leopold. In an adjoining street, which bears his name, is the house and garden of Rubens, the site of which he purchased from the corporation of the Arquebusiers, whose hall was next door,

in exchange for his great picture in the Cathedral, of the "Descent from the Cross." The generality of the houses are built of dark sand-stone, without any architectural decoration, except their castellated gables, which, as usual, are turned upon the street; the windows are generally furnished with espions, and at many of the corners, niches in which are seated tawdry Madonnas, covered with a profusion of brocade and copper lace. The weather became rainy before we left, and this together with the want of footways to the streets, the filth of the centre, and the odours which the unusual stream of water awoke from every sewer, left our impression of the domestic comforts of Antwerp, less agreeable, than it might have been, had we seen it under the influence of light and sunshine.

Antwerp like all its fellow cities in Belgium, boasts an origin of obscure antiquity, so remote as the fifth or sixth century, it is said,—but at all events in the tenth, it was of sufficient importance to constitute a Marquisate for Godfrey of Bouillon, the hero

of Tasso, and the King of Jerusalem, the unexpected arrival of whose followers from the Holy Land, in January 1100, has been commemorated in a festival still observed by the women of Antwerp, as the Vroukens-Avond, or the *Ladies' Eve*, in remembrance of the domestic fêtes which welcomed their return.

Two hundred years after, it was annexed along with the province of Lower Lorraine, to the Duchy of Flanders, and along with it passed successively under the dominion of Burgundy, Germany and Spain, sharing in all the vicissitudes and disasters which befel the rest of the Netherlands, under their various dynasties.

Antwerp contests with Holland and Germany, the glory of the discovery of printing. Little books of devotion, printed there, from solid blocks, early in the fourteenth century, are still in existence ; numbers of volumes in moveable types, bear its name and the date of 1476 ; and during the sixteenth century, in the days of Plantin, it was one of the most extensive

seats of printing in Europe, all the productions of its press, and especially its classics, being in the highest repute.

The original citadel and fortifications were erected by Philip II, which were strengthened and enlarged in the reign of Charles V, at a time when Antwerp was one of the first commercial cities in Europe. Its manufactures of linen and silk were then exported to every part of the world; its woollen trade was the parent of the same manufacture in Great Britain, and its local historians, perhaps with some exaggeration, describe its commerce as so flourishing, that the population supported by it, exceeded one hundred thousand souls, (though one is puzzled to discover where they found accommodation within its walls) and fifty thousand sailors and travellers on the river and in the faubourgs; and Scribanius declares that he has seen 2500 vessels in the Scheldt at a time, of which five hundred daily entered the river, whilst two thousand lay at anchor before the city;

but, "*pour être témoin veredique, il ne suffit pas toujours d'être témoin oculaire.*" It was in this era of its splendour, that one of its merchants entertaining Charles V, at a banquet, kindled a fire of cinnamon, then a costly rarity, with the Emperor's bond for two millions of florins, observing, "that the honor of having such a guest at his table, was infinitely more precious than the gold." Its prosperity was, however, annihilated a century latter, when at the treaty of Munster, which closed the Thirty years' war in 1648, Holland had sufficient influence to obtain the closing of the Scheldt. For nearly one hundred and fifty years, this noble river flowing through the midst of one of the most active and industrious countries in Europe, was forbidden to be navigated by a single native sail, every vessel which bore produce for Antwerp, being compelled to transfer her cargo to a Dutchman under whose flag alone it could reach its destination. This unnatural embargo was terminated by the

French in 1794, and Antwerp under the dominion of France, rose again into new and augmented importance.

Napoleon, enamoured of his theory, that France was nothing unless with the Rhine for her eastern boundary, and the Scheldt for the northern station of her navy, conceived numerous projects for its realization. At one time planning to build a city at Terneuse, at another, fixing on the vast alluvial plain that surrounds the Tête de Flandres, but finally determining to make Antwerp, herself, the object of his ambitious care, and render her, in his own words, "a pistol, perpetually at the throat of England." With this view, its military defences were all restored—huge basins constructed at the east of the city, capable of floating, one twelve, and the other forty vessels of the line, and store-houses, rope-walks, and sail manufactories; everything, in short, for the equipment of an arsenal, were prepared upon a gigantic scale.

In acknowledgment of these magnificent favours conferred upon their city, the mer-

chants of Antwerp presented Napoleon with a frigate, fully equipped and stored. In 1807, ten vessels of the line had been built at Antwerp; in 1813, *thirty* ships of war had been launched, and fourteen others were still upon the stocks. The fall of the Emperor, however, preceded that of his intended victim, and by the treaty of Paris in 1814, his vast constructions at Antwerp were ordered to be demolished—his buildings and magazines were all destroyed—the vessels of war found within the basins, were portioned out between Louis XVIII and the Prince of Orange, and the docks, alone, were spared from destruction, partly from the difficulty of accomplishing it, and partly at the entreaty of the merchants of Antwerp, as a harbour of refuge for their ships, which were liable to serious injury from the ice, which, in winter, is borne down the swollen current of the Scheldt.

The period of its union with Holland, however, from 1815 to 1830, may be said to have been the golden age of Antwerp. Its situation for trade is by far more favour-

able than either Rotterdam or Amsterdam, and being admitted, along with them, to an equal participation in all the resources of the kingdom, it rapidly outstripped them in every department of trade, so much so, that, at the period of the revolution, "*Antwerp did more business, in every article of colonial produce, with the exception of tobacco, than Amsterdam and Rotterdam united.*"* The events of the revolution put an instantaneous check to this career of affluent prosperity; Antwerp, compelled to form a portion of the independent kingdom without colonies, or commerce, or foreign relations, found her shipping laid up idle in her docks, and her merchants; conscious of the ruin which had overwhelmed their prospects at home, transferred their capital, and their exertions to Holland, and united their fate to that of their now triumphant rivals. In 1838, all the ports of Belgium possessed, but one hundred and eighty-four sail of merchant vessels, of whom one hundred and fifty-

* White's Belgic Revolution, vol. i. p. 94.

two were employed merely in the coasting and channel trade, and thirty-two in foreign voyages, whilst, in the same year, Holland had no less than 1400 sail.

From the events of 1830, and their results, Antwerp never has, and never can, thoroughly recover. For some years after the Repeal of the Union, her quays and harbour were literally motionless and empty; and, at the present moment, even with occasional revivals, her trade appears to have only the fate of Venice or of Genoa in prospect. Her chief employment is in carrying the raw material which is to supply her own manufactures, and which she must do at a disadvantage in freights, as her shipments in return fall far short of her importations. Of 2662 Belgian vessels, which cleared out from her various ports between 1831 and 1836, no less than 739 *went out in ballast!*

In the years immediately succeeding the revolution, the shipping trade of Antwerp seemed to undergo an absolute paralysis. In 1829, the year preceding the Repeal of

the Union, 1028 vessels entered the port, amounting to a tonnage of 160,658 tons. In 1831, the year after the Repeal, only 398 vessels entered the Scheldt with a tonnage of 53,303 tons ! Since that period, a superficial glance at the returns, would lead to a belief that the trade had more than recovered itself.

In 1832	1,254	vessels entered with a tonnage of	150,294
1833	1,104	. . . .	129,607
1834	1,064	. . . .	141,465
1835	1,089	. . . .	153,243
1836	1,245	. . .	176,079
1837	1,426	. . . .	225,030
1838	1,538	. . . .	257,048
1829	955	. . .	136,456
1830	1,028	. . .	160,658

But on coming to scrutinize this table by the test of the relative quantities in cargo and in ballast, the air of prosperity grows fainter, and the real nature of the trade more distinct. It appears by the following table, that of 5694 which *arrived* in all the ports of Belgium in the years 1835, 1836 and 1837, the entire were freighted with cargoes, except 141. Whilst of 5707 which cleared *outwards* in the same time, no less than

1833 left Belgium in ballast, in other words arrived with the produce of other countries, but departed without carrying away any Belgian manufacture in return.

STATEMENT *of number and tonnage of vessels, distinguishing Belgian from Foreign, and vessels with cargoes and those in ballast, which arrived and departed at ports in Belgium, during each year, from* 1835 *to* 1837.

Years.	BELGIAN.					
	With Cargoes.		In Ballast.		Total.	
Inwards.	No.	Tons.	No.	Tons.	No.	Tons.
1835	472	47,409	6	408	478	47,817
1836	493	67,808	5	295	498	68,102
1837	540	71,282	24	2,004	564	73,346
Outwards.						
1835	402	41,522	72	6,529	474	48,051
1836	422	56,665	99	13,436	521	70,101
1837	438	57,355	116	16,303	554	73,658

Years.	FOREIGN.					
	With Cargoes.		In Ballast.		Total.	
Inwards.	No.	Tons.	No.	Tons.	No.	Tons.
1835	1,316	160,104	48	4,877	1,364	164,981
1836	1,289	160,378	40	4,073	1,329	164,451
1837	1,443	214,739	18	886	1,461	215,625
Outwards.						
1835	916	105,545	457	61,711	1,373	167,256
1836	869	105,224	476	59,863	1,345	165,087
1837	827	131,088	613	84,497	1,440	215,585

Antwerp and Ostend are suffering, also, by being defrauded of their fair propor-

tion of legitimate commerce by the extensive system of contrabandism, which prevails upon all the Belgian frontiers, and is carried on in foreign vessels; a loss to which they would not be subject, were the government in a position to protect the portion of trade to which the country must still give employment, by an effectual system of the *douane* upon the frontiers and the coast.

Antwerp had once a most extensive manufacture of silk; in 1794, there were twelve thousand workmen employed in that branch alone. The number is now reduced to two hundred, and their only employment is in producing a beautiful description of rich black taffetas, which is used for the Spanish head-dresses, still worn by females.

Another most important branch of maratime trade, that of the transit of goods for consumption in the interior of Europe, has been almost entirely drawn from Antwerp by the Dutch, but the government hope to recover it, by means of the railroad, from the sea to the Rhine. Here, again, the most formidable opposition may be looked for from Holland, whose vessels on the

Rhine are prepared to dispute with her the possession of this important department. Independently of the fact, that the carriage of goods by railway in England, where it has been most extensively tried, has not, as yet, answered the expectations of its projectors; the Dutch, having by their recent treaty with Prussia, obtained the free navigation of the Rhine, on the same footing as those vessels which bear the Prussian flag, will be disposed to make sacrifices in their freights, in order to underbid their rivals by land; the loss on which will be a very trifle compared with that which must ensue, if the Belgians are disposed to play out the same "desperate game with cold iron." At the present moment, I am told, that the Rhinvaeders, of from two hundred to three hundred tons burthen, carry goods for from eight to nine florins the *last*, from Rotterdam to Cologne. This charge, it is natural to suppose, they will be able to reduce, so soon as a competition is instituted by the railroad. The advantage on the side of the latter will be manifest, as regards the item of time, the journey to Cologne by the rail-

road occupying but twenty-four hours, for what may require a number of days by the Rhinvaerder. But the question is—can the directors, or rather the government, whose property it is, reduce the carriage so low, as, with charges of all kinds, to underbid the Dutch to such an extent as to command a preference? A Belgian gentleman, who spoke to me in high hopes as to the ultimate success of the railroad in the struggle, admitted, at once, that it could only be achieved by a dead loss upon the adventure —*which, however, he said, the government would, as usual, bear out of the taxes!* Well may the merchants of Antwerp apply to the concocters of the revolution, the complaint against those who, "intending to build a tower, set not down first and count the cost thereof."

A journey to Antwerp is a pilgrimage to the shrine of Rubens. Rubens is the tutelary idol of Antwerp—it was his home, though not his birth-place—his favourite residence, and the scene of his triumphs; and he has left to it the immortal legacy of his

fame, his master-pieces, his monument, and his grave. Its museum and its churches are enriched by his principal pictures; and the inhabitants pay back, in grateful homage to his memory, the renown which his genius has entailed upon them. Fêtes in his honour, on a style of great magnificence, had been celebrated but a few weeks before our visit; to inaugurate his statue, which was crowned by the city, amidst public rejoicings, processions, music, banners, and all the pomp of civic triumph. The excitement had not yet subsided, and we found every table covered with portraits of the great painter, verses in his praise, and programmes of the recent festivals; and, with every individual, the absorbing topic was something connected with his name and his monuments.

Antwerp has long been entitled to distinction as a nursery of the arts. The list of painters which she has produced is quite surprising; and in addition to those with whom we are familiar, as Teniers, and Vandyke, and Snyders, her churches abound in

pictures by natives of the city—by Metsys, and Florus, and Jansens, Quellyn, Seghers, Crayer, Franc, Jordaens, and a multitude of others, who form a numerous gallery in themselves. Her enthusiasm in the cultivation of genius seems never to have flagged, and its unimpaired appreciation, at the present day, is attested, not only by the pride of its population in their public treasures, museums and churches, but by the vast number of private collections, at the houses of its nobility and merchants, which abound with the choicest pictures of the Dutch and Flemish schools, those of other countries being less eagerly sought after. From fifteen to twenty of these private galleries exist in Antwerp; and an equal ambition prevails throughout to maintain the ancient character of the city, by the patronage of its living artists. We saw an exhibition of modern pictures, in a room attached to the museum, which contained some of unusual ability, especially landscapes and cattle, amongst which some sheep and cows by Verboeckhoven of Brussels, eminently en-

title him to the epithet which his countrymen are fond of bestowing on him, of the Landseer of Belgium.

The Museum in which a large collection of Rubens and Vandyke's pictures are deposited is an ugly suite of rooms in an obscure corner, the building having been a suppressed convent. It is situated in a little garden, ornamented, or rather disfigured by some wretched statues, as if their worthlessness was meant to serve as a foil to the gems within doors. It is curious that that which ought to be a native collection does not contain a single piece of Teniers, except one wretched thing which it is libellous to ascribe to his pencil, and only two of Snyders. In England, where the best pictures of Rubens' pencil are comparatively unknown, and where our countrymen are accustomed only to his allegorical subjects and ungraceful women, the homage rendered to his abilities is, I think, rather an echo of his continental fame than a genuine appreciation of his merits; but any one who wishes thoroughly to estimate his loftier pretensions, and ardently to admit his

claims to admiration, should visit the Museum and the Catheral of Antwerp. Here his pictures evince not power alone, not merely that wonder-creative imagination that peoples the canvass with the most masterly compositions, but they exhibit a sweet adherence to nature, a rich perception of beauty, and a magical command of expression and action, that makes the canvass record the event it commemorates like a page of history or the voice of a poet. It is impossible, for instance, to look at "the Descent from the Cross" without almost expecting the attitudes to change as the act proceeded, so eager and intent are the countenances of his figures, and so earnest and real their occupations; and in the same way in the picture of "*the Crucifixion*," where the Centurion has already broken one of the legs of the malefactor on the left, who has torn it from the cross under the agony of the stroke, and the soldier has the iron raised to crush the other; one's very flesh thrills in anticipation of the scream that seems about to issue from the excruciated lips of the sufferer. This is a

marvellous picture in every respect, and certainly the pride of the Museum; each individual figure is a perfect episode—Christ himself, in all the dignified calm repose of recent death; the soldier, with his hand raised to pierce his side, whilst Mary Magdalene, who seems in a paroxysm of suffering, to have been clinging around the foot of the cross, springs forward in a sudden agony of terror, with her arms outstretched to intercept the spear. This head of the Magdalene, Sir Joshua Reynolds pronounces to be "the most beautiful profile he ever saw of Rubens or any other painter." Finely contrasted with the stirring action of these figures, is the expression of the mother of Jesus, who appears stupified by the exhaustion of her very sufferings, and that of the good Centurion, who leans forward over the neck of his horse in evident sympathy and horror at the scene before him.

"*The Adoration of the Magi*" is another picture of Rubens, well known in England from its innumerable engravings. It is, however, in every respect inferior to the

Crucifixion, though a superb picture. But there are two charming paintings, the insensible attraction of which is, perhaps, the sweet repose of the subject; one a Christ exhibiting his wounds to satisfy Thomas's incredulity, and the other the Virgin instructing St. Anne. It is impossible for any creature to sit before these, and another exquisite little copy of "The Descent from the Cross," and to retire from them unimbued with a veneration for the genius that could conceive and embody such imaginings. There are in all fifteen paintings of Rubens in this collection, and they are certainly triumphs of his easel; the gallery at Munich possesses no less than *ninety-five* of his works, but after having seen both, I would rather have five of these at Antwerp than the ninety-five which are the boast of Bavaria.

There are five or six pictures by Vandyke, but they are in the same style with Rubens, groups from sacred subjects; and they do not bear to be placed in such immediate contact with the chefs-d'œuvres of his

master. Vandyke's unrivalled portraits, and his single figures are as much superior to those of Rubens, as the latter excels him in combination and compositions. Their productions are as an epic poem to a lyric or a sonnet; and whilst Rubens is the Homer of his art, Vandyke may be well contented to be its Pindar or Plutarch. The rest of the walls are occupied with the canvass of the other second rate names which have competed for fame with these great originals, Van Thulden, Seghers, Jordaens, Ve Vos, and a picture by Quellyn, which, I presume, to be the largest in the world upon canvass, as it occupies the entire end of the gallery, from the ground to the roof, and must be, at least, forty feet broad by sixty or seventy high. With the exception of Rubens and Vandyke, in fact, the collection is commonplace. In one of the halls is appropriately placed, as a relic of Rubens, the gilt leather chair which he occupied when president of the academy. Unfortunately it has not proved the tripod of the Pythoness to his successors.

I think it is Dr. Clarke who advises every traveller, who wishes speedily to map the spot in which he finds himself in his memory, to take the earliest opportunity of ascending the nearest tower or mountain, and I am most fully prepared to certify for its advantages. One half-hour on the tower of the Cathedral of Antwerp will give a stranger a better idea of its localities and extent, than a week's driving around its streets and environs. The Cathedral itself is situated near the pretty little square called the *Place Vert*, (which was, I think, at one time a burying-place attached to the church). The building itself is defaced, as usual, by a number of ordinary houses erected against its walls, and which, of course, cover up all the exterior beauty of the architecture. It stands, tradition says, on a spot of ground which belonged to a monastery founded by Godfrey of Bouillon. The exquisite steeple, however, was built shortly before the reign of Charles V., (who stood as godfather to the great Bell,) from a design which originally contemplated two

towers of equal grandeur and elegance, but one only was completed. The ascent is fatiguing in the extreme; and as the day was stormy, the vibrations of the tower were sensibly felt as the wind rushed through its beautiful galleries. Workmen have been employed for some years in restoring all the decayed portions of the stone-work, and the steeple is still filled with their scaffolding and machinery. But the view, long before gaining the extreme summit, is by far the finest in Belgium, extending, as it does, over the broad current of the Scheldt, whose windings can be traced from Ghent to Flushing, whilst to the north, the eye can reach Breda and the frontiers of Holland; to the south and east, the distant cities of Brussels, Mechlin, Turnhout, and Louvain. The vast extent of country which is swept by one of these Flemish prospects is really quite inconceivable, whilst the absence of a single hill to intercept the horizon upon either side, renders them as peculiar as they are surprising.

Over the grand doorway, as we enter

below the tower, is a crucifix in bronze, which was cast from the fragments of a statue which the Duke of Alva erected to himself upon the Citadel, with the insulting motto on its pedestal "*ex ære captivo*," in allusion to its being made out of the cannon, taken in his first successful battle against the Prince of Orange at Jeminghem, near Emden in 1568. This memorable statue gave origin to the distich,

> Cur statuam vivo tibi Dux Albane dedisti?
> An quia defuncto nemo daturus erat?

Requesens, the successor of Alva, in his anxiety to conciliate the people, took down this record of their sufferings, and concealed it, but being discovered by the citizens after the "Pacification of Ghent," it was by them melted and applied to its present purpose.

Opposite the Cathedral, in the square, is a gothic screen of iron work, which covers a fountain; tradition says it was made by Quentyn Metsys, "the blacksmith of Antwerp," an operative Cymon, who was converted into an artist by the charms of a Flemish Iphigenia, whose father consented

to her marriage only when her lover had become a painter. An inscription on a stone, near the great door of the Cathedral, which enrols Metsys as a "pictor incomparabilis artis," acknowledges the obligation of the arts to the attractions of his mistress.

"Connubialis amor de Mulcibre fecit Apellem."

The body of the church within is of immense extent, so great, indeed, that our cicerone ventured to say it was five hundred feet in length, and half that in breadth at the transepts. The gothic arcades, which separate the nave from the side aisles are of prodigious height, and with the innumerable pillars that support the organ and surround the choir, the coup-d'œil, at entering, presents quite a forest of columns; "these, and the dim religious light," falling upon the monuments around, from lofty windows emblazoned with armour, and the effigies of ancient ecclesiastics; and streaming downwards from the richly painted dome give an air of solemnity to the whole as striking, though by no means so magnificent, as Westminster Abbey. Before the period of

the French revolution, and whilst Antwerp was still the seat of a bishopric, (it is now appended to the see of Malines), the Cathedral was one of the richest in Europe, abounding in altars of marble, candelabra of silver, paintings, statues, and jewels, which were all despoiled or destroyed by the followers of reason. Among them was an *ostensoir* for holding the holy elements of the host, in massive gold, which had been a gift from Francis I. The treasury is still abundantly supplied with donations of a similar kind, though of less intrinsic cost perhaps, and its innumerable chapels, with their altar-pieces and ornaments, its sumptuous choir, and astonishing carved pulpit by Verbruggen, covered with allegories and quaint devices, form a scene which is remarkably imposing.

The innumerable paintings which are hung in every space, might, elsewhere, receive a suitable homage of admiration, but here, eager expectation leads one only to the triumphs of Rubens. Rubens has four superb pieces here, " The Elevation of the

Cross," "*The Descent from the Cross*," "The Resurrection," which adorns the tomb of Moretus, the printer, and the "Assumption of the Virgin," over the centre of the grand altar. I never saw a more striking illustration of the power of a picture, than the effect produced by the Descent from the Cross. It was closed by its two folding volets when we entered, the backs of which contain, likewise, two designs by Rubens, one of St. Cristopher, the patron saint of the guild of arquebusiers, for whom he painted the picture, and the other, of a hermit, neither of them of great merit. These engaged no attention, apparently, but when, bye and bye, the sacristan moved them to either side, and displayed the astonishing picture within, the effect was quite remarkable—the loungers and passers-by were now arrested, one by one, as they came within the circle of attraction, till a little crowd of peasants and soldiers were collected before it, in the most breathless attention, and, as if struck with a new sensation, I saw them

look silently in each others' faces, apparently to discover whether others felt as they did themselves. One girl, with a basket on her arm was caught at once, as she passed, and remained with the rest, quite abstracted in contemplation; it recalled Wordsworth's exquisite description of the street musician by the Pantheon:—

What an eager assembly! what empire is this,
The weary have life and the hungry have bliss,
The mourner is cheered and the anxious have rest,
And the guilt-burthened soul is no longer oppress'd.

That errand-bound 'prentice was passing in haste—
What matter—he's caught, and his time runs to waste;
The newsman is stopped, though he stops on the fret,
And the half-breathless lamp-lighter he's in the net.

The porter sits down on the weight which he bore,
And the lass with her barrow wheels hither her store;
If a thief could be here, he might pilfer with ease,
She sees the musician, 'tis all that she sees!

The genuine admiration of this artless assemblage, was as marked a triumph to the genius of Rubens, as the pecking of the birds at his basket of fruit was to the execution of Apelles. I never saw such a re-

buke to the "cant of criticism," and I could not but feel it to be a compensation for the judgment of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who, I do not know why, professes to have been *disappointed* with its excellence. The picture was painted for the corporation of gunsmiths, in order to compose a quarrel as to the ownership of a stripe of ground, on which they alleged that Rubens had encroached, in the erection of his house and gardens. Another story concerning it, is that the pupils of Rubens, in their romps during his absence, had thrown down one of their number, who in his fall, had rubbed out the arm of the beautiful Magdalene, and that, in order to restore it before the return of their master, they selected Vandyke, who repaired it with so much ability, that Rubens acknowledged its superiority to the original. The painting, like all the other treasures of Belgium, was one of the ornaments of the Louvre, during the reign of Napoleon.

The tomb of Rubens is in a little chapel, consecrated especially to his family, in the

Church of St. Jacques; it is situated immediately in the rear of the high altar and the choir. Its only ornament is an exquisite picture of a Holy Family, by "the illustrious dead," in which he has introduced portraits of himself as Saint George, his two wives, Isabel Brandt and Helen Forman, as Martha and Mary, his father as St. Joseph, his grandfather as Time, and his child as a cherubim. In a vault beneath, is laid the

dust which is
Even in itself an immortality.

It is covered by a single slab of marble, with an inscription which records the talents and the learning of the Seigneur of Steen (Stein i toparcha), of whom it says, "*non sui tantum seculi, sed et omnis ævi Apelles dici meunt.* His genius," it proceeds to say, "elevated him to the friendship and the confidence of kings and princes; so that when named a counsellor of state, by Philip IV, King of Spain and the Indies, and despatched as his ambas-

sador to the court of England, he laid the basis of peace between his Sovereign and King Charles II. His family are now extinct, and this monument to his memory, which had long, as the inscription says, been neglected by his last descendants, was restored in 1775, by one who was then a canon of the cathedral, and who traced a relationship with the great painter in the maternal line, "*ex matre et avia nepos.*"

The church which contains this interesting tomb, is, in proportion to its extent, the most splendid in Antwerp. In its chapels there are some sculptures in marble, in alto-relievo, of surprisingly elaborate execution, and of merit sufficient to entitle them to a visit to Paris, which they, of course, made under the paternal government of the Emperor. Its walls are, also, covered by quantities of Flemish pictures of value, adorned with statues by Verbruggen, Willemsens and Quellyn.

At the entrance to the *Church of St. Paul* is a "Calvary," one of those exhibitions of the sufferings of Christ, that by the

coarseness of their conception and their barbarous execution, create a feeling of disgust in any mind of intelligence or taste, and to the ignorant, whom they are intended to attract, must connect the solemn idea of the Saviour with the most coarse and revolting associations. It consists of a vast crowd of horrid-looking statues to represent the faithful priests, holy men, and prophets, surrounding a rock, out of and in which, a number of angels and saints are flying and walking; and below, a tomb, with the body of the Saviour on a bier—the whole surrounded by little holes and recesses, in which the wicked are represented, undergoing all the tortures of purgatory, in forms and attitudes as varied, at least, if not so poetical, as those of Dante. The interior of the church abounds, as usual, with statues and paintings, amongst which are some of Teniers and Vandyke, and the grand altar is decorated by a masterly statue of St. Paul from the chisel of Vanbruggen.

The congregration was assembled for vespers when we entered the Church of the

Augustines to see Rubens' picture of "The Marriage of St. Catherine." It is quite opposed to all our protestant feelings of the decorum and reverence due to the solemnity of public worship, to see the indifference and almost rudeness with which the valets-de-place conduct their parties of sight-seers around a church, regardless of its most impressive ceremonies, brushing past the altar in the full blaze of its panoply, and disturbing the devotions of all who may intercept their view of a picture. It was almost painful to listen to the "cant of criticism," amidst the chanting of anthems, clouds of incense, and the solemn pealings of the organ, but it appeared to excite no such feeling in those around us. With us, however, in England, the outward solemnity of public worship is increased by the impression that it is the fervent and simultaneous out-pouring of the hearts of a whole united multitude; whilst in the Catholic churches, except in the few minutes occupied by the repetition of the mass, the act of worship is individual and apart, and

performed almost by rote, at any hour of the day, from sunrise to evening. The parties, whom I shrunk from interrupting, as we slipped past their little *prie dieu* chairs, seemed to feel nothing whatever at the intrusion, but raised their eyes for a moment from their missals, to take a view of the strangers and then returned to the point where they had left off. This apparent indifference, gives a bad impression of the reality of their devotions; but still it was not universal, and I have seen in the Roman Catholic churches, numbers whose whole soul seemed to be abstracted from all that was passing around them in the deep sincerity of their adorations.

In Antwerp, and, indeed, elsewhere, but here we remarked it particularly, the vast majority of the congregation were females, who invariably seem to be the most devout. I was particularly struck with a young mother, apparently a lady of rank, and of most interesting appearance, who walked up the aisle of the Augustines, holding two beautiful children by the hand, and kneel-

ing between them before the high altar, repeated the vesper prayer along with them. The innocent fervour of the children, as with their little hands clasped and timid eyes, they looked upwards at the splendour of the altar, now lighted up for the evening ceremony, and the modest devotion of their gentle mother as she taught them to pray, was a more exquisite picture than all the gorgeous imaginings of Rubens, with which we had been enchanted in the morning.

It was dark ere we could complete our visit to the other churches of Antwerp, which here, as elsewhere, are the great depositories of the public treasures. We had light, however, to see the exquisite pulpit in the church of Saint Andrew. This is by far the noblest work of this kind that I have seen: it represents a boat drawn upon the sea shore, beneath a rock on which Christ stands, and calls to the fishermen Simon, Peter and Andrew, "follow me, and I will make you fishers of men; and straightway they left their nets and followed him." Nothing could be more appropriate

than the selection of this subject for such a purpose, and in the church of Saint Andrew too, and nothing of the kind can excel the extreme beauty of its execution. The figures, which are full of grace and expression, are by Van Geel,—and the other parts and minute details, are by Van Hoole, some of which, such as the fish and nets in the boat are as delicately finished as those of Grynlyn Gibbons. Against one of the gothic columns of this church, by the south transept, there is a small portrait and an obscure little monument in black and white marble to the memory of Queen Mary of Scotland, erected by two of her maids of honour, "præ-nobilis familiæ *Currell*," who had attended her to the scaffold, and had then returned to the Low Countries. Its inscription records their indignation at her fate, "seeking refuge in England where her relative Elizabeth was Queen, she was, by the perfidy of the parliament and the heretics, held in captivity for nineteen years, and then had her head cut off for the good of religion. *Perfidia senat: et heret: post* 19

captivit annos, relig: ergo caput obtruncata."

We dined with M. David, a wealthy merchant, for whom we had brought a letter of introduction; and if his house is to be taken as a specimen of the rest, the merchants of Antwerp must indeed be "princes." It occupied three sides of a large court-yard, with lofty staircases on either side of the porte-cochère, the rooms furnished with English carpets, and the walls, as usual, covered with some excellent pictures by native artists. It is singular, that the use of carpets should be so slow in making its way upon the continent; climate is not the cause, because in countries much colder than England, they equally reject them with the countries of the south. Independently of their comfortable enjoyment, they are as much *a picture* on the floor as stucco work or frescoes are a picture for the ceiling. We seem to divide the two with our continental neighbours; with us the floors are richly decorated, and the ceilings forgotten, comparatively, whilst with them the ceiling

is the great field for the display of taste, and the floors of ordinary houses are seldom more costly than earthen tiles or sanded fir. In their palaces, indeed, the idea of an English floor is adopted, but it is exhibited not in velvety carpets, but in the more expensive material of an inlaid *parquet*.

The Citadel of Antwerp is now little more than a patch of ground encompassed by the circuit of its fortified walls; the chapel and the interior buildings, which once occupied its centre, having been blown to dust by the bombardment in 1830. The accounts which an eye-witness gave us of some of the scenes of this siege, were an admirable illustration of the slight space that separates the ridiculous from the sublime. The sensible people of the city were, as I have before mentioned, dreadfully opposed to the revolution, and M. Rogier, and the other leaders of the "*patrioterie Brabançonne*," having in vain essayed to persuade them that they were the most suffering popu-

lation in Europe, were about to give them up as

> Wretches no sense of wrongs could rouse to vengeance,
> Sordid, unfeeling, reprobate, degraded,
> Spiritless outcasts,

when the victorious republicans resolved to carry their arms to the gates of Antwerp, and achieve its regeneration by assault and storm. They accordingly invaded the city, seven thousand strong, and sent a summons to General Chassé to surrender. The general, who had resided for years in the city, was well aware of its loyalty, and had likewise been inspired by the Prince of Orange with a confident hope that the rebellion would yet be stayed without bloodshed. He looked on the martial display of the "liberators" only as a riot which might be quelled by the civil power, if it did not sooner expire of itself, and he advised the magistrates, as the best means to save the city from being destroyed by artillery, if he were compelled to repel them by force, to assent to their entrance within the gates,

on an express understanding that they were not to approach the citadel, or molest the gun-boats in the river, and that they were merely to hold quiet possession of the town till the commandant should communicate with the Hague. To save the property within the walls from destruction, the magistrates complied, and opened a negociation with the commanders of the insurgent force. The mortifying degradation of this step, and the violence which it must have been to the feelings of men of loyalty and respectability, may easily be imagined when it is known who these commanders were. One was a Monsieur Mellinet, a French officer, who had been compelled to abscond in consequence of "a suspicion of debt" and a conviction of bigamy. Another was a M. Neillon, a Frenchman also and a private soldier, but since a *major-general* in the Belgian service. He had a short time before been hissed off the stage at Antwerp, when an actor at the theatre there. Like General Vandamme, who, when a barber's boy at Ghent, had been whipped and ba-

nished for thieving, and vowed never to return unless at the head of an army, *which he lived to accomplish;* M. Neillon is said to have launched a similar threat against the audience of Antwerp, which he too had, perhaps, sooner than he expected, the means of putting in execution. The third was a Monsieur Kepells, once an artillery man in the Dutch service, but whose chief occupation had been carrying the skeleton of a whale round the country, the same which was afterwards exhibited at Charing Cross in London, and from its huge dimensions acquired the title of "the Prince of Wales." It was to these three eminent commanders, that the opulent merchants of Antwerp were now compelled to surrender quiet possession of their town. The negociation was concluded by them in utter ignorance, however, of the real strength of the insurgent army, but when the gate was thrown open, and the mob rushed into the city, the gentleman, who was my informant, and had been an eye-witness of their entry, declared that their appearance baffled all description.

They poured like a torrent of mud through the gate, some with no shoes, some with but one, some without hats or head-covering of any kind, some few on horseback, others dragging along two field pieces with ropes, some with guns and swords, others with bludgeons, but the vast majority with no arms of any kind,

"Viribus confisus admirandisque lacertis!"

They instantly broke faith with the townspeople, denied the right of the magistrates to enter into any convention with the Dutch commandant, an alien and a foreigner; and proceeded forthwith to attack both the citadel and the gun-boats, in which they had an idea that there was money deposited, in direct violation of their specific stipulations. They assaulted the hospital attached to the citadel, killed some four-and-twenty poor invalids, and put the rest to flight over the back wall into the citadel, when old Chassé, reluctant to give credit to the

probability of their perfidy, believed it to be some mistake, and gave them twenty minutes to retire. But instead of following his advice, they attacked the arsenal in search of arms, upon which Chassé fired a few guns from the ravelin in the hope of dispersing them, and finally hauling down the white flag, he opened the whole thunder of the citadel, the forts and the fleet in the harbour; he beat the arsenal to the ground in a few minutes, and setting fire to the great warehouses, known by the name of the *entrepôt*, which was stored full of merchandize—the whole were in a few hours reduced to ashes and ruin. In the meantime, the shot and shells which were falling in the town were playing havoc in all directions; the inhabitants fled in terror, or hid themselves in the cellars; the prison caught fire and disgorged its inmates; and the whole city seemed threatened with instant destruction; till the magistrates having succeeded in reaching the citadel, succeeded in appeasing the rage of the

indignant commandant, and procured a renewal of the truce. What a picture of the leaders, the agents and the acts of a revolution!

The subsequent siege by the French in 1832, when the Dukes of Orleans and Nemours "fleshed their swords" against the Dutch, was something equally characteristic. It inflicted no injury or danger upon the town, being confined merely to the citadel and the trenches around it, and was rather regarded by the inhabitants as a kind of grand military drama, which was got up at the expense of Holland and France for their amusement. The French, in fact, did all in their power to contribute to its theatrical effect. They had not smelt powder since Waterloo, except across their own barricades, and they were impatient to make a grand display for the recovery of their reputation. The operations were conducted with all the pomp and paraphernalia of a parade, and the soldiers marched to work in the trenches with colours flying and trumpets sounding. In fact, so thoroughly melodramatic was

the whole affair, that seats on all the elevated parts of the city were hired out to view it, and the roof of the theatre itself, being a suitable place, the play-bills announced, "*the public is informed that places may be procured at the Théâtre des Variétés for seeing the siege!*"

With the exception of its churches, Antwerp possesses no public buildings of any importance. The Hôtel de Ville was, at one time, a rival for any in the Netherlands, but it was burned by the mutinous Spaniards of the army of Requesens in the sixteenth century, and the present edifice has nothing very remarkable in its appearance. It is situated in a curious little antique square, surrounded by old Spanish houses, and amongst the rest, one in which Charles V was wont to lodge on the occasion of his visit to the city. The *Exchange* is the model from which that of London was constructed, a square court-yard, surrounded by arcades with groined arches, and supported by truncated pillars in the Venetian style, with rudely sculptured capitals. The

Hanseatic House is another huge mercantile depôt which stands between the two basins of Napoleon. It is of vast dimensions and is visible from a considerable distance on all sides of Antwerp. In an old tower near the Marché de Poisson, we were told that there were still to be seen the dungeons which had been occupied by the Inquisition during the reign of the Duke of Alva and the " Council of Blood."

CHAPTER II.

ST. NICHOLAS—MECHLIN.

Quays of Antwerp—Peculiar mode of training young trees—The Scheldt—The flying bridge of Napoleon—Story of Van Speyk—Polder at the Tête de Flandres—Its catastrophe in 1837—Zwyndrecht—*Different professions of the Belgian saints*—Story of the curate of St. Joachim—Beveren—*St. Nicholas*—Dense population—A market—Flemish ballad-singers—Ancient drama of Flanders—Tamise—RUINOUS CONDITION OF THE COTTON TRADE *in Belgium since the revolution*—Its causes—Inability of the government to afford relief—Diminution of exports since 1833—Remarkable petition of the trade to the legislature—Remedies suggested by them—Impracticability of any commercial union with France—Or the Zollverein—*Dendermonde*—Siege by the Duke of Marlborough—Description of its present state—Its manufactures—MECHLIN—Curious old city—The Archbishop Sterckx—A political prelate—Mechlin lace—Flax—The Cathedral of St. Romoald—The tower—Carillon—Immense bells—The corporation of Mechlin—*The tomb of the Bertholdi*—Van

Eyck's paintings—*Vandyke's Crucifixion*—Superiority of Rubens in composition—*Church of Notre-Dame*—"The miraculous draught of fishes"—Favourite paintings of Rubens in the Church of St. John—Hôtel de St. Jaques.

We started early this morning for St. Nicholas, the central town of one of the most important linen districts in Belgium, being the great mart for the produce of the Pays de Waes. Before leaving Antwerp, we took another walk through its principal squares and along the quay. The latter which is of great length, stretching up the banks of the Scheldt, is planted with tall trees, and well finished in every respect. These trees are trained in the nurseries of the Low Countries, specially for the purpose of planting in streets and squares. They are regularly pruned, like standard fruit trees for eight or ten years, till the stems, have attained ten or fifteen feet in height before they are removed, and having in the mean time, been frequently transplanted to render the roots fibrous and hardy, they are placed in their intended position, with

scarcely any risk of failure or delay in the renewal of their growth.

The Scheldt is here about the breadth of the Mersey at Liverpool, and we crossed it by a steam ferry, to the Tête de Flandres. During the reign of Napoleon, this passage was made by a flying bridge, one of those ingenious contrivances, which are still seen upon the Rhine, in which a line of boats, attached to a large float, and sustaining the length of the cable by which it is moored in the centre of the river, are moved from side to side across the stream, accordingly as their heads and helms are adjusted, to allow the force of the current to impinge upon them. The river opposite Antwerp is so deep, as to allow the largest vessels to lie close along side the wharfs, but its waters, from the nature of the soil they traverse, are always yellow with sand and mud, and rush past between the city and the Tête de Flandres, with a rapidity that anything but justifies Goldsmith's title of the "*lazy*" Scheldt.

In the river, nearly opposite the commer-

cial basins, there occurred in 1831 an instance of heroic devotion in a young officer of the Dutch navy, for which it is rare to find a parallel. He was a Lieutenant, named Van Speyk, and in command of one of the gun boats, which had guard upon the citadel, whilst yet in the hands of the Dutch. It was in the month of February, and the little bark had been compelled to seek shelter from the drifting ice, by running into the harbour of Flushing. A storm, however, drove her from her moorings, and forced her on shore nearly opposite the city of Antwerp. The efforts of the crew to work her off were unavailing, and a crowd of the revolutionary canaille were already waiting on the quay, to secure the prize and their prisoners, when the young commander went below, and with the aid of one companion opened the powder magazine, gave his assistant a moment's time to plunge into the sea, and then applying his match, blew up himself and thirty of his sailors, rather than fall into the hands of his enemies.

On landing at the Tête de Flandres, the little fortress which commands the level polder in front of Antwerp, we drove along a causeway raised several feet above the level of the plain. This vast alluvial district was laid under water in 1832, during the siege of Antwerp, and continued submerged till 1835, when the water was again expelled; but three years ago, the breach in the dyke, which had been imperfectly repaired, gave way during an extraordinary tide, inundated the whole plain, and swept away some thirty or forty peasants, who were passing along the road to the market of Antwerp. The view back upon the city from this point is one of the finest imaginable, all its bold and salient features coming into one coup-d'œil; the river, the noble line of quays, the citadel, the gigantic Hanseatic depôt, and rising far into the sky, above them all, the majestic and beautiful tower of the Cathedral of Notre Dame.

The road passed through the little village of Zwyndrecht, a secluded little spot embowered in trees upon the verge of the great

polder. The income of the curate, a comfortable and easy divine, who saluted us from the roadside, is thirty pounds a year, but the saint to whom the church is dedicated, St. Makuyt, being in high repute for the cure of weak limbs in children, brings in a handsome income in addition. The fame of the saint, is in fact, the main source of income to the incumbents of these miserable livings, many hundreds of which do not exceed that of Zwyndrecht. The first question of a priest, in fact, on being offered a benefice, is, what is the stipend? the second, who is the saint? The reason is this, that the whole contents of Pandora's box, all the diseases of mankind have been parcelled out to the various saints of the calendar, each taking his or her own peculiar department of the pharmacopœia:—thus, Saint Blaize is consulted for the quinsey, St. Nicholas for barrenness, St. Apollonia for the tooth-ache, St. Dorothea of Alois for pining children, St. Œdilia for weak eyes, St. Cornelius for the hooping-cough, St. Joseph au besoin for ladies who

are anxious for heirs, St. Wendelin for the murrain in cattle, and St. Gertrude to drive away rats. Of all the most valuable and money-making are the ladies who preside over the illnesses of infants; not only the frequency of the malady, but the alarm of the mother contributing to the fame and the profits of the saint. Not merely Roman Catholic ladies who laugh at the powers ascribed to the saint, but even protestants, who, in their calmer moments, despise the imposture, seldom fail in the last extremity to call in the aid of the priest; they distrust the profession, but they shrink from neglecting the last expedient, however, unpromising. If the patient sinks under the process, that arises from the parent having been too long in applying, and, if it revives, the faith of the mother receives a powerful inclination towards belief in the church.

Mons. D—— who was in the carriage with us, mentioned rather an amusing anecdote connected with the system. His uncle is a priest and incumbent of a parish, the patron saint of which, Saint

Joachim has under his charge the department of *deafness*. The income of his living is small, but it is far more than exceeded by the profits of the saint, who has been gradually rising into repute during the last fifty years that the old gentleman has had him under his care. He came, however, a short time since to visit his nephew at Antwerp, and feelingly complained of a disaster, which was likely to ruin both the saint and his practice; he had completed his eightieth year, and *had grown so deaf himself*, that he could no longer make out the complaints of his patients!

Beveren, a beautiful village, half way between St. Nicholas and Antwerp, is the residence almost exclusively of rich families and retired citizens, most of whom are the proprietors of the lands of the district. Amongst them, one house was pointed out as that of M. Borlut, a lineal descendant of one of the leaders of Ghent, who distinguished himself at the battle of the Golden Spurs in 1302.

St. Nicholas, where we arrived for break-

fast, is a long straggling town, with an immense market place, in which Napoleon once reviewed a division of his army. The prosperity of this little place is very remarkable and arises altogether from the flourishing condition of the flax trade. In 1788, the population was but eight thousand, and it is now upwards of eighteen. The country around is one of the most populous in the world, the inhabitants amounting, according to the statistical account of M. Van den Bogaerde, to no less than 5210 individuals to a square league, of whom sixty in every hundred are agriculturists, twenty-five tradesmen, and fourteen live by other means.

It was market day and the town crowded by the peasantry, who were bringing in the flax to the "deliveries" of the several merchants, who attended from Ghent and Antwerp. M. Cools, who is member of the Chamber of Representatives for the district, did us the favour to accompany us over the town. The market place was filled with stalls and booths of dress, hardware and

furniture, great piles of wooden shoes, were spread over the pavement, and amongst the agricultural produce, was a profusion of buck wheat (sarassin) which is made into a sort of soft, sodden cake, by no means unpalatable.

I was amused by a chorus of ballad singers, who occupied a moveable stage in the market, furnished with a large painted scene, divided into compartments, each representing some incident in the songs, with which they favoured a very numerous audience, who were grouped in great delight around them. I bought the ballad which was in Flemish, and contained three pieces, two of them drinking songs, which were illustrated in the scene above, by a party seated in an estaminet. The song was an eclogue in which two farmers, like Tytyrus and Melibœus, complained of the pressure of the times, Tytyrus professed to be so poor, that he could no longer afford to pay his barber, Melibœus assures him that bad as their position is, it is no worse than it was under Napoleon, and both join in the

refrain, that geneva is the only remedy against all evils, political as well as personal. The third was a metrical account of a girl, called Joanna Scholtz, who had recently been executed for murder, and the different compartments of the scene, exhibited each stage of the story from the innocence of the heroine, to her exit at the guillotine. The impression which this latter ditty made on the nerves of the audience was prodigious, as the female singer who took the chief voice in it, with the energy, at least, if not with the elegance of Malibran, proceeded from verse to verse, pointing with a wand, which she bore in her hand, to the pictorial illustration of the story behind her. This travelling orchestra with its waggon and scenery, is surely very like Horace's account of the chorus, whence sprung the drama in ancient Greece? By the way, I was told by Count d'Haneal Ghent, that there exists a copy of an original comedy in Flemish, of a date much anterior to any written drama, in any of the modern languages of Europe.

After breakfast we continued our drive to Tamise or Thames, a manufacturing village on the Scheldt, which with another near it, called Waesminster, are said to have been so named in honor of King Edward III. At Thames we went over the cotton factory of M. Talboom. It is on a moderate scale, having about 6 to 7000 spindles, the machinery partly French, but chiefly from the Phœnix works at Ghent. The men and girls employed, work fourteen hours a day, exclusive of two hours for stoppages. We expressed our impression of the severity of this, but were told, that it was indispensable, in order to maintain their position in the market. The proprietor, who expressed the utmost alarm and dissatisfaction at the state of the trade observed, that if circumstances should enable the English producers of cotton yarn, to reduce their prices by a single figure, then those of Belgium must abandon the manufacture, which even, at present, was not paying its own support. Like almost every other branch of national industry, the cotton ma-

nufacture which had attained a high degree of prosperity during the union with Holland, experienced an instantaneous reverse from the events of the revolution. Factory after factory closed its doors, some in ruin, others to transfer their capital and industry to Holland, whose extensive colonies afforded that outlet for their produce, which they could no longer find at home. The ministry to check the downward career, resorted to the absurd and childish expedient of purchasing up the surplus production of the manufacturers, in order to export it at a loss, and thus get it out of the country and out of the way, only to make room for fresh accumulation of stock, and renewed adventures by the government. In this way the trade dragged on a fictitious existence, exposed to peril by every fluctuation of the markets of England, and from time to time deluged by importations made at a moment when it was necessary to get rid of a glut in the market of that country or in France. For the last two years, however, its condition has been most precarious and threaten-

ing, its consumers still further diminished by the partition of the provinces of Luxembourg and Limbourg with Holland, and by an alteration in the cost of raw cotton, and the unusual preference given to woollen fabrics above those of cotton in almost every country of Europe. In 1835, those interested in the trade made an importunate and alarming application to the government, exposing the danger in which they found themselves and imploring assistance ; the ministers were compelled to admit the urgency of the case, to confess that their protection was utterly inadequate, and to propose early measures for their relief,—but the trade bitterly complain, that up to the present hour, nothing whatever has been attempted in their behalf. *But in fact what has the government in its power?* It cannot give them that which is their only remedy, it cannot conquer or force for them a market and consumption proportionate to their means of production. Year after year their exports have been growing less and less since 1830. In 1833, according to a return in the

volume of M. Briavionne,* they exported *a million* of kilogrammes of cotton goods; in 1834, *nine* hundred thousand; in 1835, *seven*; in 1836, *six*; in 1837 upwards of *five*; in 1838 and 1839, upwards of *four*; a reduction of sixty per cent. upon the trade in the short period of six years! In the meantime, as the Belgian spinners are inferior to the English and French in the production of the finer description of goods, the importations of these direct, during the same period, have suffered no material diminution, whilst their introduction by smuggling and contraband, is still carried on to an extent which M. Briavionne states to be beyond calculation.

It is a matter to me utterly inexplicable, that under such an aspect of affairs, the number of power looms has been, nevertheless increasing from year to year, and Ghent has, at this moment, 2000 *more* than it had in 1830. The fact is admitted, and imperfectly accounted for in a memorial presented this year to the legislature from the cotton manufacturers of Belgium,

* L'Industrie en Belgique, v. 2, p. 378.

who ascribe the increase to the expectation that the government would speedily redeem its pledge of 1835, and place the trade on such a footing of protection and encouragement as would restore to it that prosperity in which it basked before the revolution of 1830, and in the interim that it was indispensible to make extraordinary efforts in order to keep the trade alive at all.

The document in which this passage occurs is in every respect a very remarkable one;* it emanates from the entire body of the trade in Belgium, not from those of Ghent alone, where the revolution is known to be unpopular, but those also of Brussels where it originated, of Courtrai, Renaix and St. Nicholas. It makes a disclosure of the difficulties under which the national commerce is suffering and their causes; and suggests expedients for the remedy in terms as frank as they are forcible. After stating that in England, France, Ger-

* A copy of the original paper will be found in the appendix to this volume.

many and America, the manufacture of cotton has increased since 1829 from 50 to 75 per cent., they proceed to show that in the same space of time, it has declined in Belgium not only in profits but in actual amount. "In Brussels," they say, "at the time of the revolution there were *four* factories of the first class in full action: at present there is but *one*, and even it has ceased to work, and four minor establishments have utterly disappeared within the same space of time; the proprietors of such as have not broken down by bankruptcy, taking advantage of such accidents as the burning of their mills to escape from the trade, or withdrawing with their capital to Holland. In the face of our country, with our hands upon our hearts, we declare solemnly that the cotton trade of Belgium has been sinking continually since the events of 1830; that it is verging to ruin, and that its destruction is to be traced to the neglect of the legislature to adopt an effectual line of commercial policy for its protection."

After disclaiming all implication of the cotton trade in the over speculation and imprudences which had ruined other branches in the years preceding, they go on to say, that "notwithstanding every circumspection and expedient that, as prudent men, they could adopt to make head against the storm, they find themselves silently and fatally undermined by an evil which they have long foreseen, and against which they have been guarding since the revolution with less success than earnestness. *They find themselves overwhelmed and crushed "(dominés et écrasés)" by foreign competition.* Their home market every day wrested from them, and the little space over which they can distribute the produce of their industry, becoming every hour more circumscribed and contracted. Only look to the situation of the trade in Belgium, and it will present to you something remarkable, and at first inexplicable. The Belgian possesses all the skill and ability of his competitors; his position for commerce is advantageous, and in some departments

the wages of labour, if not more favourable, are at least equally so with those of other countries; and notwithstanding all, we are utterly unequal to contend with them, and the struggle must inevitably be mortal in the long run: "*la lutte nous deviendra mortelle à la longue.*"

"But how can it be otherwise? We share our own home markets with our rivals, whilst they effectually exclude us from any participation in theirs. Here is a constant source of our weakness, our competitors reaping advantages from our errors that strengthen them to contend with ourselves. The true economy of machinery and the only means of selling cheaply is to sell largely. But in Belgium the consumption is the least conceivable, divided and attenuated as it is by importations from abroad. For printing calicoes, for example, the cost of engraving a roller, is the same in France, in England, and in Belgium, but from the same roller, the English manufacturer has a demand for five thousand pieces, the French one for five hundred, and the Bel-

gian but fifty. It is with impressions upon cloth as with impressions upon paper—the book, of which a prodigious number of copies will be sold, can be offered at a price little more than the cost of the paper, and in like manner, the printed goods of England and France can be sold for the bare cost of the grey calico in Belgium.

"But that which of all else inflicts the most serious injury on the cotton trade of Belgium, is her periodical inundation with the surplus stock of her rivals, which is poured from time to time into her markets with instructions to force a sale at any price, no matter how trifling. Cottons, for which in the season of the spring they asked three francs, are all a few months later exported to Belgium, and sold gladly for one franc and a half or a franc and a quarter, thus bringing the finest and most valuable muslins of France into direct competition with the coarse fabrics of Belgium. These injurious importations take place at the commencement of almost everyseason, the printers of France,

before they bring out their new designs, making a clear sweep of the old, and carefully avoiding to reduce their prices at home, they force them into consumption in Belgium, which affords the nearest and most convenient market for the purpose. The crises and commercial fluctuations of other countries, thus become equally ruinous with our own, but with this aggravation, that prudence may guard against the one, but no foresight or precautions can suffice to ward off the other."

Such is the situation of the home market —the case of the export trade is equally painfully depicted, and referred without reserve or false delicacy to its genuine cause. "The success of the foreign trade in cotton," continues the memorial, "must have a certain support from the market at home in order to enable the producer to export with advantage, but this unfortunately is the point in which of all others Belgium is specially deficient. Her trade had formerly an outlet in the Indian possessions of the Netherlands, whose ad-

vantages were exclusively secured to her by the privileges accorded to her flag.* All her surplus productions found here a vent which was every day becoming more and more important. Was there a superabundance of produce at home, either from over production amongst her own tradesmen, or excessive imports from abroad, the merchant could empty his warehouses into Java, without the necessity of stopping his machinery for a single hour. At the same time, the market of Holland herself, with two millions and a half of consumers, was thrown open to her. Such were her peculiar privileges *then*, but *now* the opening in India is closed against her goods—Holland takes continually less and less of her produce, being supplied, like herself, with the overstock of England and France—and we have just suffered in the loss of Limbourg and Luxembourg, a subtraction of 350,000 of our fellow subjects and customers. These

* The cottons of all other countries were excluded from Java and the other Dutch colonies by ad valorem duty of twenty-five per cent.

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are the facts in all their truth, and one path of safety alone lies open to us now, the securing to us inviolate the possession of our home consumption. This you can effect for us only by compelling our foreign competitors to retire from that position which they have hitherto been permitted to take up in our market by negligence, and by putting an end to their frauds upon the revenue. You must either be prepared to do this, *or to annex us to some more extended territory*, ' ou vous nous adjoindrez à un plus grand territoire.'

" We call upon you then as our representatives to take effectual steps for securing to us our legitimate rights, that is to say, the undisturbed enjoyment of the only market that has been left to us, *or to supply its place either by a commercial union with France, or by an accession to the commercial league of Germany.* We call upon you to adopt these measures without farther delay—our sufferings are keen and they have been of long endurance—and, if in spite of every effort to save us, you at last discover its impossibility, we entreat of

you, as a last favour, at least to say so openly. We shall then avail ourselves of such an announcement to shorten our struggles, and to bring to a close sacrifices and exertions that have swallowed up our capital and our time. You, at least, may obtain for us this, that our government will tell us *what it means to do. Ten thousand families* are hanging upon us for bread —fifty thousand individuals, men, women and children, spread over town and country, and dispersed through every province, depend upon our establishments for employment, and when this fails, they have no other resource to fly to. It remains with you to preserve to Belgium a branch of her industry which firm determination may yet retrieve, and which only requires vigorous resolution to free it from the tribute which it now pays to the stranger."

This importunate document produced, as might have been anticipated no beneficial result—the government have not the power to aid them—their three propositions are all alike beyond their reach;—to effectually suppress smuggling from abroad would

require a custom house police, which along so vast a frontier and so extensive a coast, would cost more than all the trade it would protect could afford to pay;—and to gain commercial advantages by a treaty with France is as hopeless a suggestion, as the proposal of a junction with the Prussian league has proved impracticable and abortive. The ultimate preservation of the cotton trade of Belgium, in all its branches of spinning, weaving and printing, seems to me utterly hopeless by any ordinary policy, and only to be achieved by a resort to some expedient as yet untried.

From Tamise, we drove through a richly planted country along the left bank of the Scheldt to Dendermonde, or as it is called, Termonde. This is a gloomy old town, very silent and unattractive, with nothing remarkable except its huge fortifications, and these I am as unable to describe as my Uncle Toby was, before he got his map, to make his audience comprehend "the differences and distinctions between the scarp and counter-scarp—the glacis and the covered way—the half-moon and the ravelin."

Our associations with the name of Dendermonde are all

> " Of vallies and retires, and trenches, tents,
> Of palisadoes, frontiers, parapets,
> Of basilisks, of cannon, culverin,
> Of prisoners ransomed, and of soldiers slain,
> And all the currents of a heady fight."

In the great square, which is close by the banks of the river, stands the Town Hall, a flat looking building, and beside it, a news room and saloon for balls, but all seemed to be deserted, and we scarcely saw twenty persons within the walls. A sight of it is sufficient to satisfy one of the practicability of the expedient resorted to by Vendome, in 1706, when defending the town against the Duke of Marlborough, (or rather his brother, who conducted the siege) of laying the country under water up to the walls of the town. By a singular coincidence, however, the expedient proved unsuccessful, as the waters of the Scheldt fell so low as to reduce the floods on the lowlands to a fordable depth. The Duke, in his letter to Lord Godolphin, says: " Dendermonde

could never have been taken but by the hand of God, which gave us seven weeks without rain. The rain began the very next day after we had possession, and continued till the evening. I believe the King of France will be a good deal surprised, when he shall have heard that the garrison has been obliged to surrender themselves prisoners of war, for upon being told that the preparations were making for the siege, he said: '*they must have an army of ducks to take Dendermonde.*'"

Teniers lived in Dendermonde, of which his lady was a native, and the house he occupied, with a fresco over the mantel-piece of the saloon, is still shown to visitors. It has some manufactories of cotton and wool, but the only process we saw was one of those mills for crushing oil, which as they find both the raw material and the consumer upon the spot, seems to be amongst the most prosperous establishments in Belgium.

The journey by the railroad from Dendermonde to Mechlin, a distance of sixteen

miles, is performed in about half-an-hour. Mechlin quite comes up to one's expectations of it. I had always heard of it by its soubriquet of *Malines la Propre*, and associated it with the stateliness and quaintness of " Mechlin lace :" and certainly it is just such an old place as one would imagine likely to produce such collars and lappets as one sees in Vandyke's portraits—quiet, grotesque-looking old houses of great size, and with rich and sober ornaments and decorations to the points and gables, tall gothic churches, and streets accurately clean, with groups of cheerful, contented-looking loungers at the doors, and here and there a demure ecclesiastic, stepping silently along in his black gown and silk sash, with his little three-cornered hat and white bands, edged with black ribband, and broad silver buckles to his shoes.

Mechlin is full of priests, as it abounds in churches, and is the residence of an Archbishop. The present prelate is M. Sterckx, son to a farmer at the village of Ophem, but one of the most restless, ener-

getic and ambitious ecclesiastics that ever aspired to political power. He obtained his present See subsequently to the Revolution, but he is now the leading spirit of the *parti-prêtre* in the legislature, and his will and wishes, transmitted through becoming channels, serve to "move, direct, and animate the whole" policy of the state, in the present ascendant position of the church in both houses. The Abbé de Pradt was Bishop of Mechlin under Napoleon.

Malines is a very antique place; its name has been derived from *Maris linea*, and the influence of the tide upon the current of the Scheldt, and its tributary, the Dyle, on the side of which it is built, is felt for a mile beyond the town. It was once fortified, and besieged by Marlborough and others, but the French levelled the ramparts and filled up the fosse in 1804. Its lace manufacture has been sadly interfered with by other competitors, but above all, by the invention of tulle and bobbin-net, but the genuine specimens of its ancient production are still in the most distinguished repute. The other occupa-

tions of the population, which is somewhere about 20,000, are the manufactures of cashmere shawls, and chairs of gilded leather, which were, at one time, an article of export, so choice was the taste of their designs; they still engage upwards of four hundred workmen, and are in as great repute as ever with the Dutch. The district around is as usual, highly agricultural, and the canals which traverse it and pass by the city, have rendered Mechlin a prosperous seat of the flax trade, and quite an entrepôt for corn and oil.

The only objects of interest, and depositaries of art in Mechlin, are, as usual, the churches. The Cathedral, whose solid moresco tower is seen from a vast distance, is of great antiquity, though not remarkable for its beauty. The tower is of amazing height, though unfinished; we ascended it by a stone staircase, in which I lost count after reckoning an ascent of five hundred steps; I should, therefore, conclude it to be at least three hundred feet high. It contains one of those "corals for grown gentlemen," as some Fadladeen in music

has denominated the carillons of the Netherlands—a chime of innumerable stops, set in motion by machinery. But, I confess, that the well arranged harmony of the carillons is to me infinitely more pleasing than the monotonous clangour that on fête days in London, disturb the city from its propriety, or the sweet but "drowsy tinklings" from every church and convent, that load the air with sound on an evening in Italy. Their gay and measured melody sometimes strikes so unexpectedly upon the ear, descending through such a distance from the sky, that it, also, seems like the song of Ariel attracting Ferdinand:—

"Where should this music be? i' the air or i' the earth?
This is no mortal business, nor no sound
That the earth owes.
It swept by me upon the waters,
Allaying both their fury and my passion
With its sweet air."

Some of the city bells, in another chamber above, are of inconceivable size, one of them being 15,000 pounds in weight. Whilst we were in the room, two of the Mechlin "youths" came in to ring the peal, which

always sounds before sunset; and although the one they selected was the third or fourth in point of size, and they set it in motion by means of a lever, worked with the foot, it occupied from seven to ten minutes before they succeeded in producing an oscillation so great as to make the tongue of the bell strike the sides. On the outside of the tower, at this height, is a dial for the clock; a circle, the same size of which, is designed in small stones upon the pavement of the square below, connected, I think, with a sun-dial; I paced it and found it upwards of forty feet in diameter, although its counterpart on the tower looks to be of the ordinary size, such is its extreme elevation. The guide who conducted us to the top, pointed out a balcony from which a watchman, who is always stationed aloft to look out for fires, fell, a short time ago; he was taken up below, as our informant said, "as soft as a pack of wool." The tower and its bells are a distinct and separate erection from the church, although united to it, and belong to the corporation of the city—a

remnant of the olden time, when every free city had its "belfry." This corporation seems still to have absolute power within their bailiwick, and not to exercise it with due "discretion," they prevented the passage of a canal, from Louvain through their streets, which would have been of most signal advantage to their trade; and, more recently, they stoutly and successfully resisted the government in bringing the central depôt of the railroads within the circuit of the city, instead of fixing it, as they have been compelled to do, at some distance beyond its boundary—a circumstance which they now sensibly regret.

The church itself is dedicated to St. Romoald, whose body, enclosed in a suitable shrine, is deposited upon the high altar. In the choir, a chapter of the Golden Fleece was held in 1491, at which Henry VII of England was invested with the insignia of the order. In the curtain wall of the choir, to the left of the altar, there is rather an interesting monument of the family of

the Bertholdi, a powerful house, who in the thirteenth century, having been entrusted with the office of "Protector" of Malines, by the Prince Bishop of Liege, to whose dominion it was attached, succeeded in making themselves independent of their Sovereign, and for some generations, held absolute authority as Lords of Malines. The inscription on their tomb is quaint and poetical:—"*Trium Betholdorum, qui sæculo decimo tertio Mechliniæ dominarunt hic ultima domus.*" There are numbers of other marble monuments of ancient Archbishops and prelates of Mechlin, but none of them so interesting as this.

There is a curious series of old paintings, illustrative of the actions of St. Romoald, which are attributed to Van Eyck, and are, at all events, referable to his period and school; an inscription relates, that in the sixteenth century they were hidden, to elude the fury of the Iconoclasts; and another records their second removal in 1794 or 5, "tempore perturbationis Gal-

lorum," to escape the equally formidable insanity of the French revolutionists.

This church has, also, a magnificent picture of the Crucifixion by Vandyke; but, however astonishing in its vigorous excellence, and in the conception of its individual parts, its comparison, as a whole, with that of Rubens' Descent from the Cross, or his painting of the same subject in the Museum at Antwerp, will sufficiently exhibit the superiority of the latter in the art of composition. Like a perfect drama, into which no character is admitted, that does not contribute to heighten the denouement, there is no figure or expression in Rubens' picture, that has not an immediate reference to the main action of the moment, and that does not conspire to concentrate all the interest in one simultaneous movement. In Vandyke's Crucifixion, however, the three crosses form three distinct episodes, each tells a separate story, and thus divides the interest of the subject, instead of working it up into one overpowering sensation, as Rubens does. But, on the other hand, this

splendid picture exhibits all Vandyke's masterly powers of individuality and detail, every figure is a study, and above all, the beautiful Magdalene at the foot of the Cross, is one of the most lovely conceptions that has ever been embodied upon canvass. Sir Joshua Reynolds says "this may be justly considered one of the first pictures in the world, and gives the highest idea of the genius of Vandyke." The agony of the dying thief may be strongly suspected of being suggested by Rubens. The Cathedral possesses one of the very finest carved pulpits in the Netherlands, representing the conversion of St. Paul, in which the terror of the horse, and the fall of the rider, are exhibited with the most surprising vigour and effect.

In another church, that of Notre Dame, there is a picture by Rubens of the miraculous draught of fishes, which with its volets once formed eight subjects, which he painted in ten days for the chapel of the Poissonniers. The entire were carried to Paris, and

only five returned. Another of his favourite pictures is the Adoration of the Magi, in the church of St John, of which he used to say, " c'est à Saint. Jean de Malines, qu'il faut aller pour voir de mes beaux ouvrages." I must say, however, that it did not afford me the same pleasure, which it must have done to the great painter himself. The sacristan showed us an autograph receipt of Rubens for 1800 florins, for this picture and its volets, all of which he painted in eighteen days. It bears date in March, 1624. The altar of the church was likewise designed by him, and the walls are covered with a profusion of paintings, the works of artists of minor eminence, and whose merits, though they would be recognized elsewhere, are unfavourably brought into contrast with those of their great master.

We dined at one of the most comfortable and clean hotels I have seen in Belgium, that of St. Jacques, in the Marché aux Grains, and returned, by the railroad, to a very inferior one at Brussels, though much more pretending.

CHAPTER III.

LOUVAIN—WATERLOO AND NAMUR.

Scenery around Louvain—*The Belgian railroad system*—Peculiar adaptation of the country—Policy of Government interference in their construction—The average cost per mile—Causes of the difference in outlay between Belgium and England—Cheap rates of travelling in Belgium—*Accidents*—Success not yet decided—Louvain—Its extent—THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUVAIN—Its former fame—Its present condition—The bierre de Louvain—*The great brewery*—Its processes—Amazing consumption of beer in Belgium—Its different characters—*The Hôtel de Ville*—Its pictures—Gallery of M. Vanderschreick—The collegiate church of St. Pierre—*Legend of Saint Margaret of Louvain*—Tomb of Justus Lipsius—Flight of the "brave Belges," at Louvain in 1832—Singular change in the character of the people for courage—The present soldiery—*Terveuren*—The park and palace of the Prince of Orange—*The Forest of Soigné*—WATERLOO—The Belgic Lion—Its injury to the field—Irish anecdote—Bravery of the Irish troops at Waterloo—*Hougemont*—The orchard—Relics of the fight—The Duke of Welling-

ton's estate—No monument to him on the field—The Duke of Marlborough—La Belle Alliance—*Quatre Bras*—The woods cut down—Beautiful scenery of the Meuse and the Sambre—NAMUR—My Uncle Toby—The citadel—Don John of Austria—The cathedral—*The church of St. Loup*—The trade in cutlery—THE DESCENT OF THE MEUSE—Its beauty and its wealth—Andennes—*History of Mr. Cockerill*—His influence on the manufactures of Belgium—*His print-works at Andennes*—Ruined by the revolution—*The manufacture of paper in Belgium*—Huy.

THE route from Mechlin to Louvain, which we passed this morning, is the first of the line of railroads on which we have perceived any striking inequality of surface; numerous cuttings and embankments occurring as it approaches the latter town. Beyond it the alluvial and sandy plains disappear, and the country assumes the usual hilly and diversified appearance, so much so, that before arriving at Tirlemont, it passes under a tunnel of nearly a thousand yards in length. The scenery, too, along the banks of the Dyle, is most rich and diversified, Louvain, itself, being seated on the skirts of a forest, which has evidently been a portion of that of Soigné, at some

distant period. Fuel must be here pretty abundant, not only wood being plentiful, and coal at no great distance, but, in the sunk land, I observed a stratum of turf, under the sandy surface, which had been worked in large quantities, and stacked along the side of the road.

Belgium, from its geographical position, not less than the extraordinary adaptation of the nature of the surface, seems to have invited the experiment of supplanting the old modes of conveyance, by an uniform and comprehensive system of railroads. The project was taken up by the government in 1833, and the plan finally executed, was that of taking one point, in the centre of the kingdom, and issuing from it—north, west, east, and south—lines, to maintain a communication with the sea-ports of Ostend and Antwerp, and the great commercial outlets of France and Prussia. It is expected, that on reaching the frontier of these two states, at Limbourg and Couvin, in the Bois de la Thierache, the enterprize would be taken up by private speculators,

who would continue the chain to Cologne, on the east, and, on the south, in the direction of Paris. The whole project is in direct opposition to the *laissez faire* principle of the English government, whose maxim is, to leave everything to private enterprize, that private capital is calculated to grapple with. But Belgium has been so long accustomed, both under France and Holland, to "government interference" in the minutest concerns of the nation, even to the prejudice or supersession of individual speculation, that the habitual policy of the country may have rendered its intervention indispensible. And as the entire extent of all the lines projected, in progress, and open, will not exceed three hundred miles, and these can be completed, at a cost infinitely lower than anything that has yet been attempted in Great Britain, the undertaking is not so very gigantic as at first sight it might appear. One advantage which arises from this undertaking, is that its benefits will thus be extended equally to every portion of the kingdom; had it been left solely

to private enterprise, those lines alone would have been selected, which promised to be the most prolific in profits; and other districts, less inviting, would never have been traversed by a railroad at all. But the government, by combining the entire into one comprehensive system, is enabled to apply the excess of gain on one section, to repair the possible loss upon another, and thus extend its facilities alike to all. But private enterprise is by no means prohibited, and in addition to the government works, applications from capitalists have been already granted, to construct branches in the mining districts of Hainault.

The average cost of those already completed scarcely exceeds £8,500 a mile,* including carriages and buildings. The most expensive line was that from Louvain to Tirlemont, which, including the tunnel

* "Travaux publics en Belgique," a comprehensive document just published in Brussels, by M. Nothomb, minister of public works, with copious details upon the railroads. A very able paper, by Mr. Rawson, in the proceedings of the Statistical Society of London, contains also ample information regarding them.

I have mentioned, cost £11,661 a mile, and the cheapest, that from Dendermonde to Mechlin, which, as the level surface of the ground had barely to be disturbed for laying down the rails, cost only £4,583. This, however, is for single lines of rails; that alone from Brussels to Antwerp being yet laid with double, though all have been constructed with a view to their ultimate adoption. The line now in progress from Liege to Verviers, passing, as it does, through a most unequal and hilly country in the vicinity of the Vesdre, will, I imagine, from the numerous embankments and cuttings through rocks, be the most costly yet attempted. The natural facility of the ground, and the consequent simplicity of the work, led to one result very different from our experience in England;—the actual costs of the works, even on the most difficult sections, have not exceeded the estimates by more than eight per cent.

In England, the least expensive line yet opened has cost £10,000 a mile, (in Ireland one has been completed, from Belfast to

Lisburn, for less than £7000), but others have cost upwards of £40,000; and the average of forty-five lines, for which bills were passed in 1836 and 1837, was upwards of £17,500 a mile *on the estimate*, which may have fallen much below the actual outlay subsequently. But, besides the mere facilities of the country, other causes have contributed to render the expenses in Belgium infinitely lower than those of Great Britain; in the former, there were no committees of the House of Commons to enable the solicitors' bills to mount to 70 and £80,000 for expenses of obtaining an act, as was the case on the instances of the London and Birmingham line, and that of the Great Western; nor were there rich demesnes and parks to be preserved, whose proprietors were to receive the *prætium affectionis* in compensation for the damages; nor towns to be entered in search of termini, where whole streets of houses and acres of building ground were to be purchased up, at an expense that would prove ruinous to any but the joint-stock capital of a railroad.

Their engineers too were enabled to avoid the expense, whilst they profited by the success of the experiments in every stage which were making in England—experiments which were even more costly when they failed.

The fares by the Belgian trains are, from all these circumstances, reducible to a sum much below the cheapest rate of railroad travelling in England; in their first-class conveyances "Berlins" (which were equivalent to the "mail carriages" on our lines, but are now withdrawn), the fare from Antwerp to Brussels was only *two shillings and eleven-pence*, whilst for the same distance, thirty miles, it was *six shillings and six-pence* from Manchester to Liverpool. In their present, most expensive carriages, the "diligences," the charge is *two shillings and six-pence*, whilst those in England are *five and six-pence*—and in their "chars-a-banc" or second-class, *one shilling and eight-pence*, whilst ours are *four shillings*—they have also an inferior train still, "the waggons" for which we have no equivalent, that carry passengers for *a shilling*. As these rates are something about one-half the

old fares by the conveyances which railroads have superseded, the increase of intercourse has been augmented in a ratio that almost exceeds credibility. The number of passengers between Antwerp and Brussels before 1836, was estimated at about 8000 annually, but since the opening of the road throughout, in that year, they amounted in 1837 to 781,250, and though the numbers diminished, as the attraction of novelty wore off, in 1838 they still exhibited an increase of from five to six hundred per cent over the old mode of travelling.

The rate of travelling does not exceed twenty-six miles an hour, and in general does not average more than twenty; and by the statement of M. Nothomb, the minister for public works, of the number of accidents there appears to have been but one man wounded in 1835, one in 1836, five in 1837, twelve in 1838, and seven in the six months to June 1839, when the return was made up. All of these catastrophes are ascribed by the minister to the wilfulness or imprudence of the parties

themselves, "no possible blame being attachable to any officer of the company." One man was drunk, and another was deaf, a third would persist in riding on the balustrade of the waggon, and a fourth stood upright in passing a viaduct, several were killed in looking after their hats; and one formidable accident alone admits of censure upon the officials, when a train returning at night, after leaving King Leopold at Ostend, went by accident into the Lys, near Ghent, the guardian of a drawbridge, which had been opened to allow a lighter to pass, having gone to drink in an adjoining cabaret, without taking the trouble to close it! The engine actually cleared the gulf by its velocity, but was dragged back into the river by the weight of the train, and the engineer and his assistant killed upon the spot."

As yet M. Briavionne remarks in his work, "*De l'Industrie en Belgique*," the receipts of the railroads are below the calculations of these projectors; but this is hoped to be remedied in time by a dimi-

nished expenditure in management and repairs; and, perhaps, by an increase in the tarif of fares, which are felt to be lower than is equitable to the interests of the undertaking. Sixty-eight out of every one hundred passengers availing themselves of the very cheapest conveyance, the "*waggons*," instead of a fair proportion, as had been anticipated, travelling by the first and second class carriages. The enterprise, he conceives to have been unwisely expanded into the present stupendous system, when the original idea of effecting a rapid communication with Germany across Belgium, independent of Holland, would have achieved the grand object aimed at, with a less expense. This was a sacrifice of solid advantages to ostentation, and has been followed by financial disappointment; but it arose in some degree, from the national desire to give independent Belgium an important prestige in the eyes of Europe. "The *Chemin de Fer* is then the more popular in Belgium, adds M. B., because the people can see the intimate connexion between its construction

and the events of 1830; *without the revolution, we should have had no railroad, and without the railroad we should have been better without the revolution.*"*

Louvain, the Oxford, or rather the *Maynooth* of Belgium is a miserable, dilapidated old town, with narrow streets and an air of dirt and desolation. Four hundred years ago, it was a place of wealth and importance, the capital of the ancient duchy of Brabant, and the residence of its sovereigns before its incorporation with the territory of Burgundy. Justus Lipsius, himself a citizen of Louvain, and born in a little hamlet between it and Brussels, records, on the authority of some old tradition, that in 1360 there were within the walls from 3,000 to 4,000 cloth workers, who gave employment to 150,000 artizans, (an evident exaggeration in amount, that attests, however, the fame of its past prosperity), and the story adds, that at the hours of meals, the great bell of St. Peter's

* M. Briavionne, v. ii. p. 445.

was sounded to warn parents to keep their children within doors, lest they should be crushed and trampled by the crowds who were passing from their workshops to their homes! At present, its manufactures are at an end, with the exception of its beer, whose fame is known throughout the Netherlands, its population is dwindled to 25,000, and even within the circuit of the walls, large spaces covered with buildings are now converted into fields or cultivated as market gardens for the supply of the citizens.

In later times, the name of Louvain was familiar throughout the Roman Catholic world, from the renown of its university, which had existed since the year 1426, and was long one of the most eminent seminaries of theological learning in the west of Europe. It contained in the last century no less than forty-three colleges, distributed over the various quarters of the city, and was frequented by upwards of 8,000 students in humanity and divinity, who obtained, at various times, from the

emperors extraordinary privileges, exemption from taxes, freedom from arrest, freedom of the city and presentation to the most valuable livings. The bishops of the Pays Bas were ordinarily chosen from the fellows of Louvain; numbers of its members attained the dignity of a cardinal's hat, and one the Pontificate itself, under the title of Adrian VI. Charles V and his sisters were educated at Louvain. The power and the influence which it enjoyed, however, were not tempered by due discretion, and its houses assuming a right of political interference in opposition to the government, were suppressed and dispersed by the Emperor Joseph II. Under the dominion of France, the university was never restored, as its funds were required for other purposes, but in 1816, the King of Holland, as a measure of conciliation to his Roman Catholic subjects, revived its charter and re-opened its schools.

The principal building, " the Halle" of the university, is situated behind the Hôtel de Ville in the rue de Namur. Some of

the minor colleges have been thrown down or converted into hotels, warehouses, hospitals and barracks. Others are still used as the lecture rooms and theatres of the revived university. The *Collège des Prédicateurs Irlandais*, founded in 1697 by Cardinal Howard, is no longer in existence. Since the revolution of 1830, the University of Louvain has been again re-modelled, and its name altered to that of *l'Université Catholique*, to distinguish it from that of Brussels, which is known as *l'Université Libre*.

"La bière de Louvain," is to be found in every hotel and estaminet in Belgium. We went over one of the largest breweries, that of Messrs. Renier, Hambrouk and Co., the Barclay and Perkins of Belgium. It is but recently built, and being an entirely new building from the foundation, its arrangements are the most commodious and compact imaginable; it is calculated to brew two hundred barrels a-day, and is now in full work; its usual stock is 14,000

barrels. The machinery had been constructed by Sir John Rennie, of London, but has since been increased. I found here the same preference for high pressure steam engines which seems so universal in Belgium, the one erected was a low pressure one, very much to the regret of one of the proprietors, M. Behr, who conducted us over the establishment. The apparatus exhibited all the recent English improvements, but what is, I think, considered dangerous in England, they had a large copper cooler in use. Their boilers were constructed with one cylinder within another, to avoid burning in the process, a precaution which is rendered necessary from the quantity of wheat flour used for their favourite and peculiar " white beer."

The malt which was on the floors had been allowed to germinate much longer than in England, in fact, till a shoot of half an inch to an inch long had issued from each grain. By this means, the saccharine matter is intentionally so exhausted, that

the beer has but little or no flavour of it. The name of their ordinary beer is Peetermans, (from an ancient military corps of Louvain, which had existed since the thirteenth century), and the finer is the *bière blanche*, which is consumed at a distance in large quantities. An Englishman would not let either enter his lips, they are both as thin as water and as sour as verjuice, and yet the quantities consumed everywhere in Belgium is quite surprising. The annual consumption, calculated upon the excise duty paid upon beer, which is upwards of seven millions of francs per annum, and is collected in the proportion of one franc and a half for every hectolitre, or twenty-six gallons, amounts to 5,400,000 hectolitres, or something above four millions of barrels, *being about thirty-five gallons per annum for every individual of the population!* A small quantity only, not exceeding 40,000 gallons, is for foreign export. The usual price is about twelve francs a hectolitre, from which some idea may be formed of

the "thin potations" in which the Belgian peasant delights.

The operation of making this light beer is amazingly quick, the malt is mashed one day, brewed and cooled the next, fermented for forty-eight hours, and drunk the fourth morning. That for immediate use is fermented in the barrel *on its end*, a practice unusual in this country, but which M. Behr conceived advantageous. A chime, rather deeper than usual, served to retain on the top, the barm and the liquid forced up by the expansion of the fermentation, which, as the process declined, retired again to its place, thus keeping constantly an ascending and descending current, which facilitated the operation, beside being more cleanly and costing less labour. Every different district in Belgium produces a different kind of beer, which, curiously enough, cannot be successfully imitated by the others, thus the brewers of Brussels have not succeeded in producing the *uytzet* of Ghent, nor those of

Ghent the yellow *faro* which is the favourite beverage of Brussels, whilst both have failed to rival the "white beer" of Louvain.

The great lion of Louvain is its Town Hall, which is certainly the most surprisingly rich specimen of gothic architecture in the world. It is literally covered with most elaborate and intricate carvings from the foundation to the roof. Charles V spoke of placing the Cathedral of Antwerp under a glass shade, but actually one is inclined to wish for something of the kind to keep the dust from discolouring the florid tracery of the Hôtel de Ville at Louvain. It is situated in a little ancient square in which Marshal Villeroy held a council of war by torch-light on the night of the Battle of Ramilies, in 1706. The building itself, which is of the fifteenth century, is small, but its proportions and ornaments are of the most delicate elegance. It has no tower, but the heaviness of its lofty roof is relieved by turrets at the corners. The whole front is covered with

bas-reliefs, representing the history of and the destruction of the Cities of the Plain, with more fidelity than is reconcileable to modern taste. The whole has for many years been undergoing a thorough restoration, which is now complete, every decayed piece of stone being accurately replaced by a fac-simile of the original carved work. The interior is not suitable to the beauty of the outside, and an old hall on the third story is fitted up as a gallery, with a wretched collection of pictures, which are libellously ascribed to the old masters. There is, however, a gallery in Louvain of high repute, that of M. Vanderschreick, which contains a number of superb paintings of the Dutch school, Rubens, Teniers, Vandyke, Rembrandt, and, in short, a specimen of all its best masters. It is accessible to strangers, and since the dispersion of M. Schamp's pictures at Ghent, is, perhaps, the best collection in Belgium.

The churches in Louvain, notwithstanding the long presence of sc many

luminaries of the establishment, are not eminent for either their riches or their beauty. The Collegiate Church of St. Pierre, which is the principal one, has a superbly carved pulpit by Berger of great height—a rock crowned with trees, and at its foot, St. Peter on one side denying Christ, and at the other, Saul struck from his horse on his way to persecute the Christians of Damascus. A little chapel at the back of the altar is dedicated to St. Margaret, the saint of maid-servants, and is connected with a curious little legend illustrative of the times. *Margrietje* was the domestic of an old couple, who kept an hostelry for pilgrims in the year 1225, at Louvain. Her master and his wife had resolved to retire from the world, and had converted all their property into money, with which they were about to retire into the monastery of St. Bernard. On the eve of their putting this plan into execution, however, some miscreants formed a conspiracy to assassinate them, and, disguising themselves as pilgrims, came late in the evening to seek for shelter

at the accustomed inn. The good old people anxious to perform their last act of charity, sent Margaret to bring wine in a wooden bottle, still preserved in the church. The pretended pilgrims then strangled their hosts, and on Margaret's return, she shared a similar fate. Her body, however, which they carried out and precipitated into the Dyle, instead of sinking in the river, floated back against the stream crowned with an aureole, and the ripple of the water making sweet music as it bore her along. The Duke and Duchess of Brabant astonished at the miracle, caused a chapel to be built for her remains at the back of the great church of St. Pierre, where her body was embalmed and enclosed in a gilded shrine. The fame and the fidelity of the interesting saint attracted crowds of devotees to her tomb, and in time the door upon the street was closed, and another opened from the church, where the chapel and the altar of Margrietje are still the favourite resort of the serving maidens of Brabant.

The church of Saint Michel, which once

belonged to the order of the Jesuits, was one of the most sumptuous in the city: it has, however, been dismantled of all its ornaments, and its superbly carved pulpit was removed by Maria Theresa to the Church of St. Gudule at Brussels. During the reign of the French republic, St. Michel's was converted into the Temple of Reason for the district, and the statue of the Saviour was removed from the altar to make room for the Goddess of Liberty. The tomb of Justus Lipsius in the old ruined convent of the Recollets, with its sententious inscription written by himself, is a curious illustration of "the pride that apes humility."

"Quis hic sepultus, quæris, ipse edisseram
Nuper locutus et stylo et linguâ fui
Nunc alteri licebit. *Ego sum Lipsius*
Cui litteræ dant nomen et tuus favor;
Sed nomen, ipse abivi, abibit hoc quoque;
Et nihil hic orbis quod perennet possidet.
Vis altiori voce me tecum loqui?
Humana cuncta fumus, umbra, vanitas
Et scenæ imago, et, verbo ut absolvam, NIHIL
Extremum hoc te alloquor
Æternum ut gaudeam tu apprecare."

Lipsius, as a scholar, was the rival of Scaliger; he was successively a Roman Catholic, a Lutheran, and a reformed Protestant, and after publishing an exhortation to persecution, died in 1606, in the bosom of Rome with "*ure et seca!*" upon his lips. Strange that the same spirit which could prescribe fire and faggots for its fellow-men, should have lavished all its fondness upon flowers and favourite dogs, whom Lipsius has immortalized in his odes and epitaphs! Rubens has introduced the portrait of Lipsius into his picture of the philosophers along with that of Hugo Grotius, Rubens himself and his brother, with his faithful Saphir fawning at his knee, and behind him a *tulip*, emblematic of his love for flowers, placed beside a bust of Cicero; his comments upon whom, written at the age of nineteen, introduced Lipsius to the notice and patronage of the Cardinal Granvelle.

It was at Louvain that the Belgian troops, under their new King, achieved, in 1832, their ludicrous flight before the Prince of Orange, which fully vindicated for

them the soubriquet of the " Braves Belges," which they had acquired years before by their cowardly pusillanimity at Quatre Bras and Waterloo. A few days before the affair at Louvain, they had made a similar pitiful exhibition at Hasselt, where they fled in terror on the approach of the Dutch, and yet two years before, the Dutch were utterly unable to make head against the Belgians, either at Brussels, Ghent, or Antwerp ! The bravery of the Belgians is, indeed, become a past tradition. Cæsar accords them credit of being the most gallant soldiers, whom he encountered in Gaul, " *horum omnium fortissimi sunt Belgæ,*" and Florus ascribes to them the honour of turning the fortune of the day at Pharsalia. These titles they have long since, however, resigned ; the last fire of their gallantry seems to have burned out under the Arteveldes and John Hyoens, in the wars of the " Fullers and Weavers ;" for in the troubles of the Spanish persecution, the military renown of the patriots belongs almost exclusively to the soldiers of " Father William," as the Prince of Orange is still

affectionately styled. The Flemings were anxious enough, in the first instance, to fly to arms when the Duke of Alva was wringing from them his iniquitous taxes, but so soon as these were repealed, they were quite contented to leave the Dutch all the glory of their liberation. Years of repose and peace under Austria, and an addiction to agriculture and commerce, appear to have effaced even the recollection of their former valour; they were utterly incapable, even if they had been inclined to resist the progress of the French in 1794; and the whole series of the exploits of the Belgian soldiers from Quatre Bras to Hasselt and Louvain, with the single exception of the affair of 1830 at Brussels, is but a succession of laughable scampers, almost before coming within the range of a shot.

In appearance, the soldiery, whom we saw at Ghent, Brussels, and elsewhere, are awkward and diminutive little fellows, such as one could hardly see cased in uniform, on which the tailors have evidently worked by guess, without creating a smile,

even without the inseparable association of the *braves Belges*, which recurs to one's mind every time they pass. The officers, who are always lounging about the railroad stations, are much the same, and with their savage mustachios, fierce black locks, and breasts padded out till they look like pouter pigeons, they strongly remind us of the military air of the riding-master at Astley's.

> Heavens! how unlike their Belgian sires of old,
> Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold,
> War in each eye and freedom in each brow,
> How much unlike the sons of Belgium now!

Having come by the railroad to Louvain, we hired a calèche to return across the country to Brussels by Terveuren. The drive is a very beautiful one, running along the slope of the gentle, wooded hills, at the foot of one of which Louvain is situated. Terveuren is a pretty village built down the glen between two hills, with a picturesque old church on the summit of one of them. It was formerly the seat of some

manufactures, and in 1759, Prince Charles of Lorraine established in it works for printing calico, and took the utmost pains to bring artists from Switzerland and Alsace, but it has long since been utterly abandoned. The park, on the verge of which the village is built, has been for centuries the vice-regal residence for the Austrian governors of the Netherlands. It is beautifully wooded, and the irregularity of the grounds afford some exquisite landscapes. The present palace was erected by the nation, and presented along with that at Brussels to the Prince of Orange, as a recognition of his services at Waterloo. Like it, it has been waiting the fate of the final treaty of partition, and its gorgeous furniture, which has been undisturbed since 1830, is now in process of removal to the Hague. The building has no external beauty, a heavy solid edifice without decorations of any kind, and its grand charms, its paintings, and garniture, it derives from the truly princely taste of its owner. We drove home through the Forest of Soigné,

and through the village of Ixelles to Brussels.

* * * *

We left Brussels this morning for Namur through the forest of Soigné and across the field of Waterloo. The forest is thick with young straight trees; and any thing but picturesque. The timber is chiefly beech with oak and elm intermixed, and the trees are very densely planted, with a view, we were told, to render the wood loose and moist being withdrawn from the hardy action of the air, in order that when felled and cut into lengths it may the more readily split, which the beech does almost spontaneously. The foresters live in huts dispersed throughout the forest; and along the edge of the road were long piles of cleft wood ready for transport to Brussels. On the road we passed several waggons laden with coals from Charleroi, and after emerging from the forest we reached the village of Waterloo, which is situated almost upon its outskirts. We visited the church with its numerous

monuments to the "unreturning brave," and were solicited by some ecclesiastical official for a contribution to the fund *for keeping them in order*. At Mont St. Jean we had a most comfortable breakfast at the little inn, and being waited on by Sergeant Cotton of the 7th Hussars, the guide who seems to have most successfully taken the place of Da Costa, we walked with him to the various positions on the field. One has really no patience with the great hulking mountain of sand on which the Iron Lion is raised as a trophy of the valour of the "Braves Belges!" Some one has observed that the pretension of the monuments at Waterloo are precisely in the inverse ratio of the importance of the services they commemorate; the English have none, the Prussians a modest record, and the Belgians a pyramid! on which, as the Brussels guide book magniloquently points out "the Lion of Belgian proudly paws the bolt of war, with his head turned towards vanquished France, as if to menace her with vengeance

and teach her the homage which is due to valour!" But it is not the gasconade of this ambitious trophy that irritates one so much as the fact, that in order to scrape the earth together, out of which it is heaped up, the whole surface of the field has been disturbed and its identity destroyed; and that, at the most interesting spot, where the British guards made their immoveable and immortal stand "from day-break till set of sun" against all the chivalry of France. The mischievous vanity, which has thus destroyed what it pretends to commemorate, has something very *Irish* in it, and is not altogether without a parallel. Some years since a remnant of a very ancient castle of the chiefs of the clan O'Neil, which stood upon the summit of the hill of Castlereagh in the estate of the late Marquis of Downshire, was fast crumbling away, owing to the injury which it received from the cattle who browsed about it, and his Lordship directed that a wall should be built round it to save it from utter destruction. The labourers, however, who were sent for the

purpose, thinking it a pity to be at the trouble of drawing stones up to the top of such a mountain, where there were abundance close at hand, very naïvely pulled down what remained of the castle and built the wall round its site with its own materials!

By the way, whilst all justice has been done to the bravery of the English at Waterloo, and all the credit to which they were entitled, *at least*, claimed for the Scotch regiments—it is a fact that speaks, whole bulletins and gazettes for the gallantry of the Irish, that the regiment which had the greatest number *killed* of any on the field was the 27th foot, the Enniskillens, which lost one hundred and three men besides three hundred and sixty wounded.

The Château of Hougemont is undergoing a similar change, the wood which surrounded it has been all cut down, new buildings are erecting and the old ones fast passing into dust—the gate, however, still hangs upon its hinges with remnants of the old leaves that witnessed the great day, perforated by ten thousand bullets—the little chapel stands almost roofless in the

ruinous court—and the guide points out "with bated breath," the walls of the barn which was set on fire by the artillery and consumed the wounded and the dying who had been carried into it for shelter. Crossing the farm-yard a little postern leads to the

> Copse where once the garden smiled
> And still where many a garden flower grows wild.

The ruinous alcoves and grass grown walks serve to show what it had once been—and by its side is the orchard, the possession of which on that memorable day was to decide the freedom or the subjection of Europe. It was then piled with carnage, and strewn with "garments rolled in blood"—it is now encumbered with a bending crop of fruit, and one solitary grave over an English officer, who was buried where he fell, is the only memento of that fearful morning. In the field around it, three thousand French were slain by the well directed fire from within; we walked over it as it had been newly ploughed, and in the course of a

few minutes picked up a handful of bullets, some fragments of shells and grape-shot, and a musket flint still clasped in its leaden envelope—what an iron shower must have rained upon it, that after so many years, the plough should still furrow up its deposits!

The Duke of Wellington has his estate between Nivelles and Quatre Bras. Why did not the King of Holland confer on him the field itself? Above all, why are there so many monuments to all the subalterns, and none to the great Captain? It would have been surely more just, as well as wiser, to have reared that vast pyramid to mark the spot where the conqueror stood, than to provoke the remembrance that those who intrude themselves upon our notice by it, *four times turned to flight*. It is even said that a party of the "braves Belges," notwithstanding all the terror in which they were scampering back to Brussels, under the panic that the day was lost, overtook the Duke of Wellington's baggage near the forest of Soigné, and coolly took time to

plunder it—rather than let it fall into the hands of the enemy.

Lord Byron mentions his impression that Waterloo, as a plain, seems marked out for the scene of some great action. This is, of course, association in the imagination of the poet; but it is a curious coincidence that, in 1707, the Duke of Marlborough selected it as a desirable spot on which to encounter the French, and actually encamped, for many days, on the verge of the forest, in the hope of seducing Vendome to give him battle there.

At the little cabaret of La Belle Alliance, to which we had sent our carriage on from Mont St. Jean, to await our arrival from Hougemont, we got some excellent light wine: at Marengo, some years ago, I got an equally refreshing draught, after a sultry walk over the field of battle. Houses are building at this little spot; and, in short, in every direction trees are felled, ground levelled, walls fallen, and cottages constructed; so that in a few years the individual features of the scene will be changed;

but that which even time cannot efface—its deathless renown—will still, like Marathon,

Preserve alike its bounds and boundless fame.

We took the usual route by Jemappe and Quatre Bras, through the Waloon country. The flax crop was abundantly spread over the fields, undergoing the process of "dew rating," or dew riping, in which the operation of detaching the cuticle from the wood and pith, is performed by merely exposing it on the grass without steeping. At Quatre Bras the wood has been cut down from which the British, under the Duke of Wellington, repulsed Marshal Ney in the affair of the 16th of June, in which the gallant Duke of Brunswick fell. The hill is now a naked height, which is seen on the right of the road to Sombreffe.

The country, as we approach the banks of the Meuse and the Sambre, becomes at every step more and more picturesque, and the dull monotonous plains of Brabant are exchanged for the woody hills and precipitous valleys of Namur. I never saw a more

charming prospect, nor one which is so truly refreshing to an eye ennuied with the tiresome monotony of Flemish scenery, than the first view which is obtained of the old town and fortress of Namur, from the heights above the Sambre, in coming fromTemploux —a wide and winding valley, with the rapid river toiling below between towering cliffs of rugged rock upon the one hand, and steep banks covered with foliage, and occasionally crowned with old chateaux, upon the other; and in the distance, the bridges, towers, and steeples of the warlike old city, with its renowned, and once thought impregnable fortress, rising terrace upon terrace, and bristling with artillery above it.

We drove down the steep hill to the river under a glowing sunset, and having crossed the hollow drawbridge and traversed the tortuous passages that lead from the outward fortifications to the heart of the city, we took up our quarters for the night, at the Hotel de Harscamp, in a starved little square, that seemed to have been grudgingly crimped off the already pinched and

narrowed streets. It was still light enough for a stroll round the fortifications, but we soon discovered that it required the acumen of some future Sir William Gell or Claudius Rich, to determine the precise spot, which we were in search of—namely, that at which my Uncle Toby received his memorable wound, in the attack made by the Dutch and English, "upon the point of the ad- "vanced counterscarp before the gate of "St. Nicholas, which enclosed the great "sluice or water-stop," and which he himself declares to have been, "in one of the "traverses about thirty toises from the "returning angle of the trench opposite to "the salient angle of the demi-bastion of "Saint Roche."

The citadel which stands directly above the town is constructed upon the shelves of a stupendous rocky escarpment, that rises almost perpendicularly from the banks of the river, and looks like the Gibraltar of the Meuse. It was accurately restored, and its works in some places extended, by the King of Holland, some few years before the revolu-

tion, but when that event arrived, Namur was amongst the first places that hoisted the standard of revolt. There seems, in fact, to have been something between treason and cowardice in the conduct of the garrisons, who occupied every fortress in Belgium, and who, with the single exception, I think, of Antwerp, surrendered them to the " patrioterie" without lighting a match.

In public buildings, Namur, has nothing to exhibit, except two moderate churches: one of them, the Cathedral, contains some paintings, and the tomb of the gallant Don John of Austria, the natural son of Charles V, Barbara Blomberg of Ratisbon, who assumed the credit of being his mother, in order, it is said, to conceal a more illustrious parentage. Don John, who, as the grand admiral at Lepanto, combined, in his own person, the functions of a naval as well as a military commander, added to both the genius of a diplomatist, and was invested with the government of the Low Countries after the pacification of Ghent. He, in person, ob-

tained possession of the citadel of Namur, by going thither under pretence of visiting the Queen of Navarre, Margaret of Valois, who was enjoying the gaiety of Spa, and being permitted to walk on the glacis, and finally to view the interior, by the young son of the governor, in the absence of his father, he took the opportunity to entrench his immediate guard as a garrison in the name of his brother of Spain, who the next year rewarded his bravery, by causing him to be poisoned, to avoid a marriage, which he apprehended between the hero of Lepanto and Queen Elizabeth of England. He died at the camp of Bongy, a short distance from Namur, in 1578, when only thirty-three years of age.

The other church, that of St. Loup, is overlaid with a profusion of decorations of all descriptions, paintings, carved confessionals and gilded altars, its floor is of variegated marble, the columns which sustain the vaults of the roof are polished porphyry or red granite, with square plinths, interposed between each tambour in the

shaft, and the ceiling which is of solid white stone, is laboriously chased from end to end in a multitude of florid devices, so accurately raised out and under cut, that the whole looks like a Chinese sculpture in ivory. Tradition says, the carving of the entire roof, was the work of one individual monk of the Jesuits, by whom the church was erected.

The town itself has nothing else to shew, except its tall gaunt-looking old houses, crowded into narrow lanes and passages, the dullness of which is only relieved by the showy windows of its shops, shining with cutlery and polished brass work, the staple trade of Namur. It divides this manufacture with Gembloux, a little town, a few miles to the north, which is as famous for the coarser articles of "Sheffield ware," as Namur is for the finer. The prosperity of the trade, however, has been declining ever since 1814, when Belgium not only lost the French market, but the protection of the French douaniers to protect her own from being invaded by the

English; her decline was consummated by losing, in addition, the supply of the Dutch colonies, by the events of "the glorious days" of September 1830, and the entire of the workmen now engaged at Namur, do not exceed one thousand. Cheapness is of course their grand aim, and some penknives which we bought surprisingly low, we speedily discovered, like Peter Pindar's cutlery to be "made *for sale*."

The Athenæum of Namur has attained some celebrity by the chair of geology, which was established by the King of Holland, and for the study of which, the rocky ravines and valleys of the environs present abundant opportunities.

The Hotel de Harscamp is excellent, and after a most comfortable night, disturbed only by the thundering moans of a most inopportune réveille, rung, from the bells of the church hard by, every night at *eleven*, and every morning at *four* o'clock; we started, before breakfast the following morning for Huy and Liege, along the descent of the Meuse. The same

delightful scenery accompanied us, which we had overtaken the evening before on descending to Namur. On either side, high, beetling cliffs of limestone and basalt, in every crevice of which, spring the hardy roots of the little mountain ash, now covered with its ruby berries, and from every crag, luxuriant creepers hung down their "lush of leaves," which the early frost was already beginning to tinge with crimson. Every spot that could afford soil for the roots of a tree, was covered with waving foliage, and into the rich recesses of the cliffs ran up little velvety meadows from the verge of the river, in which were nestled some of the most beautiful and romantic villas and chateaux. Occasionally, on the summit of the steep ravine, in the distance, were perched the buildings of a suppressed convent, or the ruins of some feudal castle; and the very limestone rock itself, worn into fantastic shapes by the weather, not unfrequently presented all the features of a fortress, jutting out over the river below it. The road ran along a broad,

rich plain, intersected by the river, with fruit-trees planted along the hedge-rows, and yellow crops of corn which had not yet been severed. The boats were already on the river, and innumerable cars and waggons were toiling along the road, laden with produce for Namur—it was precisely the scene and the season described in Wordsworth's sonnet :

> The morn that now along the silver Meuse,
> Spreading her peaceful ensigns, calls the swains
> To tend their silent boats and ringing wains,
> Or strip the bough, whose mellow fruit bestrews
> The ripening corn beneath.

But the beauty of the Meuse is its least recommendation to the affection of the Belgians; and, like the vale of Avoca, and the banks of some other equally exquisite streams, which are "*sacred* only in song," its picturesque attractions, are, at every spot, most rudely torn away by the very matter-of-fact speculators of the neighbourhood, in the search of the mineral treasures which they conceal. Rocks of black marble are rolled down to the edge of the

road, and left ready for transport to the river; limestone is tumbled from the cliffs, and numerous manufactories of alum are constructed between Namur and and Schlayen. These and the other riches of the Meuse, its floors of coal and beds of iron render this rugged defile the most important and valuable possession of the crown.

At Andennes we passed the first of those vast manufactories, the establishment of which has made the name of one Englishman more renowned in Belgium than those of all its native speculators combined—Mr. William Cockerill. Every district of the kingdom exhibits some memorial of his enterprise, and there is scarcely a branch of the national industry which, if it does not owe its introduction to his suggestion, is not indebted to his genius for its improvement. He came to Verviers in 1798, an humble mechanic, in search of employment, returning with a numerous family from Stockholm, where he had been to erect some apparatus for spinning wool.

He obtained an engagement with a house there to construct for them machinery for the same purpose, similar to that in use in England, and by dint of singular talents, unwearied industry, and energies almost unparalleled, he speedily elevated himself to wealth and importance; mines were sounded at his suggestion, iron-works constructed, cotton-mills built, woollen-machinery erected, in short, every department of Belgian art received a new impulse under his all-grasping and comprehensive superintendence, aided by the munificence of Napoleon, and, subsequently, by the equally ardent co-operation of King William of Holland, who seemed to place the national funds for the promotion of industry, almost at his disposal. Under the powerful influence of France, and even afterwards with access to the extensive markets and colonies of Holland, the vastness of his speculations were not disproportionate to the wants and commercial connexions of the kingdom. But the simile of a tub for a whale is no actual exaggeration to represent the incom-

patibility of his Leviathan establishments, to the puny resources of the new and independent kingdom, within which they were suddenly walled up by the revolution of 1830. The gross of green spectacles which Moses brought home from the fair, were not more utterly disproportionate to the wants of the family of the Vicar of Wakefield.

The establishment of Andennes had been originally constructed by the act of the government and the King of Holland, for the printing of calicoes in the style, and with a view to out-rival the English—every process was borrowed from them, the machinery, the workmen, the designs, were all brought from England, and, for a time, the concern seemed to be prosperous. But the events of 1830 soon put a stop to that; it was useless to print calicoes while there was no stranger to buy, and no one at home to wear them, and in the course of a few years, the works were sold by order of the government to pay off their advances, and bought by their original promoter, who converted them into a paper-mill.

This trade is now one of the most prosperous in Belgium. She formerly imported her paper from France at from twenty to five-and-twenty per cent. dearer than she can now produce it for herself, thanks to the ingenuity and enterprise of Mr. Cockerill, which gave the manufacture a new character by the introduction of the machines for producing the entire contents of the vat in one continuous sheet. Since that period, the manufacture has advanced with a rapidity that is quite surprising. In 1836 there were *seven* machines on the same construction in use in Belgium; in 1839 *nineteen*, but of these *six* have now been attached to Holland by her acquisitions in Luxembourg and Limbourg. The value of their produce is upwards of nine millions of francs per annum, and their success has communicated an impulse to the production of books at Brussels, that has rendered it likewise one of the most important and promising branches of the national industry.

A few miles from Andennes, after passing a romantic old ruin of the castle of the

Dukes of Beaufort near Bien, we stopped to breakfast at the foot of the romantic fortress of Huy, which was long considered as the portal of the Meuse, till its inefficiency was demonstrated by Marlborough and Marshal Villeroy in "King William's wars," who took and retook it four times within as many years, almost without a struggle.

CHAPTER IV.

HUY, SERAING, LIEGE, AND VERVIERS.

Huy—The citadel—Churches—*The mineral and coal districts of Belgium*—Prosperity of coal mines—Quantity produced in Belgium compared with other countries—Its price at Ghent, Brussels, and Antwerp—Panic in 1836 for the exhaustion of coal in Belgium—Scenery of the Meuse—Remarkable individuals born in its vicinity—Chateaux of Aigremont and Chokier—*Seraing*—Immense extent of the works—Its produce within its own walls—History of the establishment—Palace of the Prince Bishops of Liege—Encouraged by the King of Holland—The building—Huge steam engine—Surprising extent of the operations carried on—Iron works—Halls for construction of machines—Vast numbers of workmen employed—Its exports—*Mr. John Cockerill*—Extent of his speculations—Development of Seraing attributable to them—Its future prospects—Policy of England in regard to the export of machinery—*Importation of machinery into Belgium*—Road to Liege—LIEGE—No sympathy with its history—Turbulent and unamiable character of its ancient

populace—Prince Bishop declares war upon France—Share of the Liegois in the revolution of 1830—Her threatened attack upon Seraing—The town—*Manufacture of fire-arms and cannon*—A flax mill—Its churches poor—The Palais de Justice—University—*Scenery of the Vesdre*—The railroad—*Chaud-fontaine*—SPA—Deserted—VERVIERS—The town—Conduct during the revolution—*The woollen trade of Belgium*—Want of native wool—Extent and decline of the trade—Its causes—Statement of M. Briavionne—*Joint Stock Companies* in Belgium—Account of two at Verviers—The mania for speculation—Its failure—The Prussian frontier—Limbourg—Prospects of Belgium—Her bad condition—Policy of the King of Holland—That of the present government—Present aspect of their trade—Impossibility of competing with England—Character of the Belgian mechanics—*Ruinous effects of the* "REPEAL OF THE UNION."

HUY is beautifully situated at the angle, where a mountain torrent pours past it to the Meuse. Its fortress stands on a bold detached rock, of great height and breadth, around the base of which the town is built almost upon the sands of the river; and beneath its shelter are collected the churches, monasteries, and houses of the ancient city. The fortifications are now in excellent repair, having been restored after the war by English engineers under the direction of Colonel Blanshard, at the expense of the King of Holland;

but the town itself is fast hurrying to decay. Its vicinity to Seraing, the seat of the once powerful Prince Bishops of Liege, rendered Huy a place of evident interest as an ecclesiastical frontier as well as a military one; and the church militant below, emulous of the strongholds of earthly power above, had within the small circuit of its wall no less than a cathedral, fourteen churches, and a still greater number of monasteries, abbeys, and convents, all of which, with the exception of the cathedral and a richly carved gateway that conducts to it, are now in ruins.

Here, for the first time in Belgium, we saw vineyards and their " purple store ;" but the wine is execrable, and used only for the most inferior purposes. The position of Huy on the river, and its admirable facilities for traffic, made it a flourishing entrepôt for grain and agricultural produce, in which it carries on a bustling traffic on the river; as well as in the produce of its numerous quarries. A short distance from Huy commence the coal fields, which extend to the district surrounding Liege, the working of

which was attempted so far back as the 12th century. In coals, Belgium is, perhaps, the richest country of the west of Europe, with the single exception of Great Britain; the districts in which it abounds being, in England, in the proportion of one-twentieth of her entire surface; in Belgium, a thirtieth; and in France only a two hundredth part. But her success in raising them is not in the same proportion, England having produced, in 1838, *twenty-three millions* of tons; France, *two millions and a half;* and Belgium only *four*.

The principal mining districts are in Hainault, where those of Charleroi and Mons are not only the most productive, but exhibit the best specimens as to quality; those of Liege, which are next; and those of Huy and Namur. Some valuable coal mines at Limbourg have been ceded to Holland by the treaty of 1839, another cause of dissatisfaction to the Belgians. The prosperity of the mining trade has been affected by all the changing fortunes of the country; but

its general march, though liable to great vicissitudes, has been in the ultimate result successful and improving. A few years since such was the rage for joint stock speculations, and the mania for erecting machinery in Belgium, that a panic was excited lest the veins of coal and iron should be exhausted prematurely, so rapid was the consumption of both which the force of speculation had produced. The price, in consequence, rose from 50 to 100 per cent, and an application was made and acceded to by the British Government, to permit the free exportation of coal from Newcastle to Flanders; but in the year following the alarm subsided, from very natural causes, and the price returned to its former level.

The quantity produced in Belgium for some years past has not exceeded, on an average, three millions of tons; and the ordinary price has been about 10 francs at the pit's mouth. The cost of carriage, however, and the variety of modes and distances

of conveyance, render its prices at the various places of consumption extremely unequal. According to M. Briavionne,* the following was the scale in 1837 :—

AT BRUSSELS:

For large coals (droits d'octroi included), 42 francs for the ton of 1000 kilogrammes†.
For manufacture (*gailletes*), 32 francs.

AT GHENT:

For domestic use . .	29f. 17c.
For manufactures . .	22f. 6c.
For slack . .	18f. 16c.

AT ANTWERP:

For large coals . .	36f. 55c.
For manufacture . .	26f. 30c.
For slack . . .	22f. 30c.

The price of coals in England, at the same period, was *twenty-two* to *twenty-three* shillings for what cost *thirty-five* at Brussels; and from sixteen to twenty for the others, for which the Belgians paid from *twenty-five* to *twenty-seven*. The cost at the pit's mouth,

* Vol. 2, p. 262.

† About 53lbs. less than an English ton.

at the same time, was but a shade higher at Newcastle than at Hainault or Liege,* so relatively imperfect are the means of communication in Belgium as contrasted with those of Great Britain ; and, besides, the coal floors are much more accessible and thicker in the latter country than in the other, where the upper strata has been already pretty well exhausted by upwards of six hundred years of continued workings.

* A memorandum given me by Count d'Hane, shows the cost of a cargo of coals for the university of Ghent, in the present year (1840) as follows :—

			f.	c.
2734 hectolitres of gaillettes and small coal			3898	70
Charges at the pit	.	.	109	36
Freight to Ghent	.	.	683	50
			4691	56

Charges at Ghent.	f.	c.		
City dues . .	131	55		
Labourers . .	16	24		
Cost of unloading .	368	33		
Superintendant .	14		529	12
Cost of the 2734 hectolitres in store .			5220	68

1000 livres of Ghent thus cost 10f. 95c.; and as there are 2300 livres in a ton of 1000 kilogrammes, the price, as compared with M. Briavionne's statement, would be 25f. 18c. per ton. I have, however, mentioned that the price has fallen considerably since the panic of 1837 and 1838, which accounts for the difference.

We left Huy by the bridge, which here carries the road from the right to the left bank of the river; and continued its descent towards Liege.

The view, on looking back at this hardy old town, is remarkably striking—its citadel almost by nature a fortress, independently of engineering; and, at its foot, the antique cathedral, founded by Peter the Hermit. The banks of the Meuse, and the Vesdre, have been prolific in great names; Godfrey of Bouillon, the leader of the first crusade, was born at Poisy, on the borders of Namur; Tilly, one of the great military adventurers of the Thirty Years, came from a village still nearer the Meuse; Hersthal, the birth-place of Pepin, "the Mayor of the Palace," and the founder of the kings of the second race in France, lies a mile below Liege; and at Herve, between it and Verviers, Lebrun, the minister of France, who died on the scaffold, in 1794, was employed as the editor of a provincial newspaper.

The scenery, on either side of the river, improves in richness, but loses in grandeur, as we approach Liege. The ravine through

which it rolls, between Huy and Namur, widens out into a fertile valley towards Seraing, still enclosed, however, by precipitous cliffs, on which castles, châteaux, and monasteries are perched, in positions that seem, from below, at least, to be all but inaccessible. Two, in particular, are most strikingly picturesque—the châteaux of Aigremont, between Flaune and Engis, and another above the village of Chokier, at present occupied by a Russian nobleman, whose visitors would certainly require a balloon and a parachute "to drop in upon him."

On driving round a projecting angle of the cliff, at a turn in the course of the river, we came in view of the vast buildings and innumerable chimneys of the great iron works at Seraing. These enormous works are certainly one of the wonders of Belgium; and Europe, in point of extent, possesses nothing to compare with them. Nor can one regard this vast temple to the genius of Fulton and Watt, without emotions of amazement, at the lightning speed with which their discoveries have revolutionized

the whole aspect of European industry, and created wants and expedients which, half a century ago, were unfelt and unknown; but the pressure of which, at the present day, has forced into existence such a gigantic establishment as Seraing. Compared with the largest manufactories in England, Seraing is as a mammoth to an ant-hill. The quantity of actual creative power which it engenders and pours forth, year by year, is, perhaps, equal to that of a whole generation of artizans, in the best days of Flemish prosperity; and a river, of ordinary current, flowing through a country of manufactures scarcely communicates a greater impetus to the production of the necessaries, or the comforts of life, than the steam engines which Seraing is capable of sending forth in the compass of a single year.

The circuit of its own walls encompasses everything essential to the completion of the most ponderous engine;—two coal mines are worked within them—the iron ore is raised, washed, and smelted on the spot; canals and railroads, all within its gase,

convey those cumbrous materials from process to process, from furnace to forge, till the crude mineral which, issued from the earth in its ore, is carried from the ware-room in the form of all but intelligent machines.

Seraing was many years in attaining its present singular development. It was commenced in 1817, by the sons of the ingenious individual, whom I have already mentioned as entering Verviers an impoverished mechanic, and finally contributing, by the impulse of his single mind, to advance the march of manufacturing improvement in Belgium by, at least, half a century. The buildings in which, or rather, around which its multifarious works are now congregated, was formerly the magnificent palace of the Prince Bishops of Liege, on whose abolition it became the property the crown. The brothers, Charles James, and John Cockerill, whose father had already established extensive manufactories of machinery at Liege and transmitted them to his children, conceived the idea of transfer-

ing their industry to Seraing, struck with its commanding advantages, the presence of coal and iron, and its facilities of water communication in every direction, by means of the river which flowed below its walls. To occupy all its space, one wing was fitted up for the spinning of linen yarn, and was so employed till 1822, when the extension of their business in the other branches, required the rooms which it engrossed. In 1819, they commenced raising their own coal; and in 1824, they were enabled to work iron, the produce of their own mines and furnaces. The extraordinary encouragement given to every species of manufacture requiring machinery, under the régime of Holland, was a source of continued prosperity; and even the unhealthy plethora of speculation, which has existed in Belgium since the revolution, however disastrous to others, afforded constant employment to the workmen of Seraing, and contributed to expand it to its present unexampled extent.

At the little village of Jemeppe, which is

on the same side of the river with the high road, we left the carriage, and crossed over in a ferry boat to the works, over which we were obligingly conducted by one of the superintendants. The outward edifices are all in the same condition as when occupied by the Prince Bishop, and one wing is still the residence of Mr. Cockerill's family. It consists of three squares, or court-yards, opening one into the other by noble arch-ways, the first of which is still surmounted by the arms of the prelate, with his motto —"*je maintiendrai.*" The grand front contained the apartments of the Prince himself, the second court that of his officers and suite, and the third was appropriated for the household and stables, and now forms, with the floors on the second story, four apartments, each two hundred feet in length! The whole building, with its noble façade, and the remains of fine timber which surround it, still retains an air of magnificence suitable to its former fortune. The gardens in the rear are now all covered over with workshops, forges, furnaces, and store-

houses; and behind these, still further retiring to the river, are the coal fields and iron mines; the whole forming literally a *town* within itself, daily animated by upwards of 2,000 workmen, in all the various branches of its comprehensive system.

Externally, except from the smoke of its chimneys at a distance, one would scarcely discern the nature of the vast operations going on within; but before the grand entrance on the bank of the river there lay a hugh specimen of its productions,—a gigantic cylinder, for a steam-engine to be sent to Prussia, of two hundred and fifty horse power, and of such dimensions, that this one limb of it alone was seven feet in diameter, and weighed upwards of twelve tons. Besides two hugh furnaces for smelting the raw ore, there are upwards of thirty others for the washing, puddling, and treatment of the iron in its various stages; eighty forges, two iron founderies, and one of copper; one vast hall for the construction of boilers, another for fly-wheels, and all the portions of steam-engines, and a third for locomo-

tives; besides innumerable apartments for every other species of heavy machinery, rooms for designers and magazines of models. (The spinning, and other light machinery, is manufactured at another establishment at Liege.) The whole is set in motion by seventeen steam-engines, whose united power exceeds nine hundred horses, and the consumption of coals for these and the furnaces is four hundred tons a day, the cost of raising which, we were told, was fifteen francs a ton. Its productions comprehend the whole range of English machinery for every department of industry, and its produce is exported to every manufacturing country to which it has a commodious communication—to Russia, to Prussia, to Germany, Spain, Italy and France and even to South America. Every new invention which succeeds in Great Britain has been re-produced at Seraing, within a short time of its appearance with us.

The rooms and vast halls, from the ample construction of the building, present an appearance quite startling to a stranger, who

may not be prepared for the unusual spectacle of a single chamber fitted up with five hundred vices along the sides, and all alive with the rush of wheels and the din of machines of every description, in action in the centre. The workmen are all Belgians, not a single English mechanic being now employed. Their tools, however, were chiefly from Manchester, and in reply to a remark, that at Ghent the Phœnix made its own; the superintendant observed, that they had tried the experiment and found that they could be had both cheaper and better from England. So many as 2,800 workmen have been at one time employed at Seraing, at wages varying from three francs a day to five or six, but would average about four francs round, exclusive of designers, whose gains are more considerable. The establishment has been latterly less regularly employed, owing to a damp upon speculation in general, and the completion of the contracts for the various railroads, and not above 2000 hands are now engaged. The whole concern is, likewise, at

present in confusion, owing to the recent death of the proprietor, which will occasion the entire to be disposed of for the settlement of his affairs. The extent of his speculations in every branch of industry, and almost in every country of Europe, is almost incredible. He was concerned in no less than fifty different mines, and factories for spinning and weaving cotton, woollens, and linen, for the manufacture of paper and printed calicoes, for grinding flour, making carding machines, and in short, every promising branch of industry in Belgium, France, and Germany. His property at Seraing has been estimated (I cannot answer for how correctly) at 10,000,000* of francs, and his factory for spinning machinery at Liege 3,000,000, his paper mills and buildings at Andennes 2,900,000, his flour mills at Cottbus, in Silesia, 500,000, his woollen factory at St. Denis 500,000,

* This estimate, given to me on the spot, I have reason to think must be incorrect, as in 1838 it was valued at but half this sum; and even its subsequent enlargement and addition can scarcely have doubled its value within so short a time.

his card machinery at Spa 400,000, and his shares in various other manufactories in Belgium and elsewhere 25,000,000. In Belgium, in fact, there has been a mania for joint-stock speculation, scarcely equalled by the bubbles of 1825 in Great Britain, and attended with equally ruinous results. Mr. Cockerill's encouragement and participation in these adventures to such an extent, is one source of the activity and astonishing development of Seraing; the funds of these adventurers and his own, along with the rest, being vested in the purchase of machinery manufactured by himself. In the event of their success, the speculation might have been a wise one, but followed as they have been in most instances by disappointment, the result to the proprietor of Seraing, at least, can have been little more than keeping his forges employed out of his own capital.

Still whoever may have been the individual sufferer, Seraing is a stupendous example of enterprize and skill, and if placed upon a suitable financial basis, with its

singular facilities of fuel and iron, cannot fail, under almost any circumstances, to be a vigorous concern. The quality of its iron is excellent: this ore yields from twenty-five to seventy-five, and some veins so much as eighty-five per cent.; though that of Belgium in general does not exceed thirty per cent.; and except for some very fine purposes. Seraing is perfectly independent of any importation beyond its own walls. For copper and brass it is, however, dependent upon England and Sweden, none whatever being produced in Belgium, so far as I could learn. One invaluable benefit it has already rendered to Belgium, it has served as a vast college for the education of mechanics; and in the course of twenty years, it has produced thousands of artizans who have branched off into the other provinces, and formed the rival establishments of Ghent, Brussels, Charleroi, Mons, Namur and Tournai. "The Belgians," says M. Briavionne, "have a natural taste for mechanics, and combine the two essentials to success—perseverance and enter-

prize. But these qualities would never have been called into action, nor their own resources developed had England, from the first, permitted the free export of her machinery, or Belgium imposed any restrictions upon its import."* The importations of machinery from England, notwithstanding native enterprize have been very considerable more especially of those half-animated engines know by the inappropriate, and ill-understood term of "tools," which seem to be the very life and sustenance of the rival manufacture of Belgium. In 1830, the Belgian official returns exhibit an import to the value of only 46,372fr., in 1835 it had risen to 464,377fr., in 1836 to 3,291,275fr., in 1837 it was 2,851,451fr., and in 1838, 4,708,237fr.

From Seraing to Liege, a distance of three or four miles, the drive is exceedingly beautiful, the valley of the Meuse here expands into broad and luxuriant meadows, and the steep cliffs which accompanied us from Namur, lean back into rich

* Vol. ii., p. 332.

and verdant hills whose summits are covered with timber, and their base studded with white and cheerful villas. In the midst of this picturesque scenery, the old town of Liege bursts upon us at a sudden turn of the road, built at the foot of the steep hill of St. Walberg which is covered with its churches and palaces, and spreading down to the Meuse which sweeps round its base to meet the waters of the Ourthe and the Vesdre which unite within it.

Liege is certainly the least interesting of all the great towns of the Netherlands, not that the events of its ancient times are less stirring, but the character of their prominent actions is less engaging and their quarrels less chivalrous; in its modern state, it possesses scarcely a single attractive remnant of antiquity—no paintings, no statues, no architectural beauties or remains. Its streets are narrow, irregular and dirty, and the houses devoid of any thing venerable or characteristic. Still the old chronicles of Monstrelet and Philip de Comines, and the quaint tradition of the "wild bear of Ardennes" and the feuds of the Dukes of

Brabant and Burgundy, with the insolent burghers, and the alternate ascendancies and indignities of the Prince Bishops, and the rude and savage deeds of the inhuman Louis XI, are all full of historic interest, though of a repulsive and painful kind.

Liege had been the See of a Bishop for fourteen hundred years, when the annexation of Belgium to France put a close to the dynasty of its sovereign prelates. Its rank was such amongst ecclesiastical cities, that it was visited by the Popes and the Emperors; and its citizens intoxicated, at once, with affluence and arrogance became the most turbulent and insubordinate faction that ever "strangled the prosperity" of a community. M. Ferrier in an historical résumé, prefixed to his "Description de Liège," thus sums up the condition of the burghers in the 12th century. "The morals and manners of the citizens became corrupted, at once, by the acquisition of extraordinary wealth, and the extortion of inordinate privileges from the Prince Bishops who were their ecclesiastical sovereigns.

The artisans accustomed to extravagant gains, gave but a portion of their time to industry, and devoted the rest to the discussion of affairs of state, in the places of public resort. The Prelate Albert de Cuyck, unable to subdue their murmuring and disquieted spirit, retreated behind concession after concession, till in 1198, he confirmed to them a Charter, which invested the men of Liege with privileges such as were unheard of in the age in which they lived. But these concessions so far from tranquillizing, seemed but to excite them to fresh demands—the more ample the favours yielded, the more exorbitant became their further requirements—till in the end, their restless ambition embroiled the city in contests of blood such as have tinged the page of their history from century to century. The clergy, at first, made common cause with the people against the power of the *haute noblesse*, who enjoyed at once all military and magisterial authority in the state; till the multitude disturbed from the pursuits of peaceful industry, became, at length,

the sport of ungovernable impulses, sometimes generous in their origin, but which were too often degraded into brutalized ferocity for the mere gratification of revenge. The nobles were the first sacrifice to the popular demands, and the clergy who succeeded to their power, became in turn their fellow victims." The whole story of their contests is, in fact, one succession of revolts, not for the redress of wrongs or the assertion of liberty, but for the lust of licentious and uncontrolled democracy. Occasionally, too, in the long succession of its Prince Bishops, there occurred some whose authority, instead of being exerted to control, was but employed to exasperate the fury of the populace, and to such an air of arrogance did some of these kingly prelates assume, that one of them, John Louis d'Elderen, presumed, single-handed, to declare war against Louis XIV in 1686! who rewarded his temerity by directing Marshal Boufflers to beat down the fortification of Liege about his ears, an instruction which he duly attended to.

In later times, Liege was a fief of the empire, and the Prince Bishop, the elector, had a vote as representing a portion of the circle of Westphalia. In 1830, its inhabitants, with a true hereditary taste for turmoil, were the first to take up arms on the intelligence of the revolution, and a band of patriots, mustered and marshalled by M. Rogier, marched from Liege to Brussels to aid in expelling the house of Nassau, but with the intention of merely transfering the kingdom from that dynasty to France, a project which was overruled by the clergy and the northern insurgents. With that frightful impulse which in popular, not less than individual frenzy, drives its victims into the violence of hatred of all that they ought to cherish, and has sometimes forced maniacs to eat their own flesh ;—the first fury of the patriots was directed against the manufacturing establishments, whence they drew their bread ; and nothing but the firm affection of the workmen at Seraing to their master, and the resolution to protect his property, saved that magnificent temple

of industry from being itself committed to the flames, by the worshippers of the rival goddess of liberty.

With less of elegance and attraction, there is an equal air of business-like energy and bustling activity in the streets of Liege, as at Ghent. The Meuse is navigable from the city to the sea, and its quays are frequented by the craft, which convey its produce to the various cities along its course, Ruremonde and Venloo to Gorcum, Dordrecht and the Rhine. Its streets are crowded with an incessant stream of waggons, carriages and carts, and in the better streets and squares, the shops are as gay and attractive as those of the Rue Montagne de la Cour at Brussels.

Coupled with its ancient fiery and quarrelsome disposition, its chief manufacture is a characteristic one, being that of cannon and fire-arms, which it at one time, exported to Spain, Portugal, Holland and America. Under France, the imperial factory of arms furnished annually, twenty-seven thousand muskets for the imperial army.

A story is told that the rest of the trade, anxious to share in the profits of the monopoly, besought Napoleon to admit them to a share of the supply, and presented him with a finely-finished piece as a specimen of their talents. But as, either by accident or malice, the bore of the barrell was too narrow to admit the ramrod, the Emperor gave no other answer than a frown to their ill-supported petition. Under Holland in 1829, the production of Liege amounted to no less than 190,660 stand of arms; in 1836, it rose to nearly double that quantity, but it is at present, fallen much *below one half*, and the trade is still in a state of decline. The manufacture is carried on at the homes of the workmen, who, nevertheless, established a perfect division of labour in producing the various parts, and can furnish the entire at a lower rate than either Birmingham or France, a double-barrelled gun can be had for thirty or even twenty francs. The percussion lock has not yet been substituted in the Belgian army for

the flint. The cannon foundery is calculated to produce 300 pieces a year ;, and in 1837, the most flourishing period of the trade, it even exceeded that number.

There is a flax-spinning mill at Liege with 10,000 spindles, the property of a joint-stock company, of whom Mr. Cockerill was the chief proprietor. Its works are now languid, owing to a want of consumption, and a gentleman acquainted with its affairs, spoke very despondingly of its prospects. Coals, though found in the immediate neighbourhood, are dear, as they lie deep, and we saw them generally mixed into balls with clay for the use of the stoves in the hotels and private houses, an indication that their price is a stimulant to economy.

As might be anticipated from its having so long been the residence of the most eminent prelate in the Low Countries, Liege abounds in churches, there being some eighteen or twenty for a population of 50,000 inhabitants. They are, however, destitute of all attractions, except that of St. Jacques, which is a very excellent example of florid

gothic architecture. The others are common-place structures, devoid of all valuable decorations of any kind, except a few indifferent statues by Delcour the sculptor, who was himself a native of the city. The Palais de Justice was formerly the residence of the Prince Bishops, and in its ample arcades, supported by truncated columns, exhibits traces of its former magnificence. The University, which has some eminent professors, especially of natural philosophy, was another foundation of the King of Holland, and besides a library of some seventy or eighty thousand volumes, contains Museums of Natural History, and Minerals of unusual value. But every thing connected with modern Liege is common-place and uninteresting; its only charm is its exquisite situation at the juncture of the three beautiful valleys of the Meuse, the Ourthe and the Vesdre, and a very brief sojourn is sufficient to satisfy the stranger in pursuit of "fresh fields and pastures new."

* * * * *

We left Liege before breakfast for Verviers through the exquisite valley of the Vesdre, which, as it is narrower and more tortuous than the descent of the Meuse, excels it in picturesque beauty, though inferior in the grandeur of its general effect. The entire line of the road was through richly wooded glens and ravines, where the river had forced a passage between the fantastic cliffs which time had wrought into shapes like fortresses or the battlements of ruined strongholds. Below, the Vesdre itself, too shallow to be navigated, twists round each sweep of the winding cliffs, now shining in the sunlight, and again scarcely visible under the dark shadows of the trees and rocks. The lover of the picturesque will shudder to be told, that it is through this charming valley that the railroad is to be carried to connect Liege with Verviers on its way to Cologne, and even now the engineers are at work levelling, blasting, and uprooting to make way for it, cutting off a projecting cliff here, and filling up a useless ravine there, and flinging lofty

embankments across the entrance of the sweetest recesses of the valley, into which you are only admitted to have a peep through the archway on which the train is to traverse the highway.

About four miles from Liege, in one of the glens of this beautiful river, is Chaude-fontaine, a spring which has long been the holiday resort of the Liegois, and has now grown into a miniature watering place, with its hotels and other agrémens. And half way to Verviers, a road striking in between the hills on the right leads to Spa, one of the superannuated favourites of fashion, which has long since yielded the throne to younger and gayer rivals. The crowd now rolls past the turn in the road which leads to it, eager to reach Carlsbad or Wisbaden, and no longer contented, as in the Sir Charles Grandison age, to pace the "*Promenades de quatre heures*," walk minuets in the "*Vauxhall*," or make stately excursions to the cottages of Marmontel's Annette and Lubin. Still the country and scenery around it, and the magnificent

mountains and woods of the Ardennes yield, in nothing, to the attractions of the later protegées of *ton*, but along with the rest of the ungrateful crowd, we too declined the open door of the antiquated and neglected beauty, and kept on the road to Verviers.

Verviers is a long straggling, but by no means ordinary town, stretching along the banks of the Vesdre, whenever the command of the stream presented a desirable site for a factory. In this, nearly 20,000 inhabitants and their machinery are located along the stream, and the uplands forming, certainly, one of the most cheerful and healthy manufacturing communities in Europe. The grand staples, are wool in all its varieties of worsted and cloth, in the production of which the valley has long enjoyed a high reputation in Holland and France, and its goods are still exported to Italy and the Levant. Like the people of Liege, the workmen of Verviers caught the infection of the revolutionary mania in 1830, but their madness exhibited itself in

a still more savage form. On the first intelligence of the revolt, they sprung, eager for the fray, and at once manifested their wishes, by hoisting the tri-colour of France, with whom they demanded an instant incorporation. The town has neither fortress nor garrison, and for two days it was the scene of the most disgusting and uncontrolled excesses. The people assembled in tumultuous masses, and with shouts of "liberty," tore down the royal insignia of the Netherlands, and razed to the ground the houses of the government officers; factories were destroyed, machinery demolished, and the whole property of the flourishing valley seemed destined to destruction from the freaks of this drunken revolution. At length the soberer citizens, forming an urban guard and a council of safety, succeeded in restoring order, and securing their property from the fingers of the children of "Freedom."

The woollen trade of the Andennes, is one of the oldest national occupations of the Netherlands, and for the share of it which

we enjoy in England, we are indebted to the fanatical fury of Philip II., whose persecutions drove the weavers of Brabant and Flanders to seek an asylum with Elizabeth in England. Unlike its other great staple of linen, however, Belgium, in her woollen manufacture, is dependant upon others for the raw material which she employs; the entire of her possessions do not feed beyond a single million of sheep, and her annual imports of wool from Germany, Holland, England and Spain, exceed 15,000,000 francs. The two grand seats of the trade, though distributed over a considerable district of the south, are at Verviers and Dison, which each produce annually from 30 to 35,000 pieces of thirty ells of Brabant in length. The manufacture is chiefly carried on in the houses of the workmen, and in some places, especially at Dison, the employers are so deficient in capital, that the truck system is universal, and the weaver paid by a portion of his own produce, which he must afterwards sell under the pressure for bread, at such a price as

he can get for it; an act of injustice to the operative, which must always tend to the manifest injury of prices, and undermining of the trade.

Down to 1814, the trade was in every way prosperous, but the successive curtailments of consumption, first by the exclusion from France, and, finally, by separation from Holland, have shaken its stability, and brought it into a state of considerable peril at the present moment. Still the number of factories have not diminished, although the rate of profits has been cut down to the lowest possible figure, especially at Verviers. It gives employment, at present, to between 15,000 and 20,000 individuals of all ages, whose wages vary from half a franc per day for children, to two francs, and two francs and a half for their fathers. The countries to which Belgium still exports are Switzerland, Germany, Italy, the Levant, and Holland; but a commercial treaty between the latter country and France, is said to have been framed with a view to transfer to French cloth, the preference now given to

that of Verviers in the Dutch market. Her exportations, however, exhibit an incredible decline since the revolution. In 1831, its value amounted to *twenty-seven* millions of francs; in 1832 to *twenty-three;* in 1833, it fell to one half, and in 1836, declined to *six millions and a half*, a diminution which is ascribable to numerous causes, but chiefly to its exclusion from Germany, by the operation of the Prussian commercial league; the states of which were once, previously, its most valuable consumers. Germany, in 1831 and 1832, took no less than 1,000,000 kilogrammes of Belgian cloth, which fell, in 1833, to 344,000, and on an average of the four succeeding years, has scarcely exceeded 250,000.

It is not difficult to imagine the vicissitudes of the woollen trade of Belgium, thus driven, within five-and-twenty years, from the markets of France and her colonies, Holland, Java, and Germany, and, shut up within the narrow circle of her new independence, to maintain a competition with her two powerful rivals—the English and

the French. Its present condition and prospects are thus noticed in the intelligent volume of M. Briavionne. "After having participated, for so many years, in the splendour of the Empire, the woollen manufactures of Belgium underwent a decline in the early stage of her connexion with Holland, which she ultimately recovered, and with such a firm success, that the events of 1830 inflicted on it but a momentary injury. The close of 1831, and the years 1832, 1833 and 1834, were, on the whole, a period of satisfactory trade. But now commenced a struggle of every description, and the clothing for the army being speedily accomplished, it became essential to look for new outlets abroad. But just at this crisis came the consolidation of the Zoll-Verein in Germany — the plague, which ravaged the Levant—the cholera, which terrified Italy—and, above all, the commercial calamities of the United States in 1836 and 1837, each and all of which interfered directly with her demand; and, to crown all, a period of depression in

the home market in 1838, and last year arrived, simultaneously with a change in public taste, as to the fashion of dress, which altered the whole character of their productions, and imposed the expense of new machinery, and differently constructed apparatus of all kinds. The general result is, at present, a weighty depression, especially in the poorer districts of Dison; and one may sum up the recent history of the trade by saying, that the two first years after the separation from Holland were *good*—1834, *disastrous*—1835 and 1836, *passable*—1837 and 1838, *bad*—and 1839, equally so."*

Verviers is an open, gay looking country town, not like the manufacturing places of England, which are dense, red-bricked rows of smoky houses, thickly huddled together—but with broad, sunny streets, and handsome white houses; the dwellings of the proprietors and their factories, being equally ornamented on the front next the street. The country around it, though beautiful, is

*De L'Industrie en Belgique, vol. ii. p. 396.

barren, and provisions of all kinds are as expensive in Verviers as in Brussels.

M. Gaudry, an intelligent proprietor of several manufactories, to whom we brought letters, gave a deplorable account of the recent joint stock speculations in Belgium, which seem to have been carried on to an extent of capital, and with a recklessness in management that is quite inconceivable. Verviers was a favourite field for their operations, owing to the variety of its resources, which presented something to suit every appetite of enterprise; and as works in actual operation were much more seductive baits for shareholders, concerns were bought up wholesale from their proprietors at the most extravagant rates, to be sold out again in retail shares to the joint stock amateurs. One coal mine, in the vicinity of the town, which had nearly ruined its proprietor, was greedily purchased by the projectors of one of these schemes, making its owner's fortune just in time to conceal his actual ruin, and after being worked for a short time, ended in the bankruptcy of the new

company—but, of course, not till it had amply rewarded the secretaries, solicitors, and directory. A worsted manufacturer, in like manner, who was on the verge of insolvency, offered his mills to a joint stock proprietary, who eagerly accepted them on his terms—paid a sum for the concern, which he forthwith invested in land, and gave him a salary, for managing his own works, more than equal to all the profits they ever realized.

It will scarcely be believed, though it is a fact, that between 1833 and 1838, one hundred and fifty or sixty companies of this kind, actually invested three hundred and fifty millions of francs, or about £15,000,000, in speculations of this kind—for insurances, mines, machine making, public works, export associations, glass manufactories, sugar refineries, cotton and flax mills, printing, brewing, in short, every imaginable undertaking that could be described in scrip.

The mania originated with some similar undertakings projected by the King of Holland, but which being prudently conducted

were moderately successful. But never was theory more vividly exemplified, in practice, than were the warnings of Adam Smith realized in the case of the Belgium companies; without either of his two essentials to success—"monopoly or defined and limited action;" they burst at once into all the pathless wilds of speculation and extravagance. To success in any industrial undertaking, two things are essential, *mind and money;* but the shareholders of a company contribute only the latter, leaving the supply of the former to a directory: the partners are only called upon to *pay* and not to *think*, so that the mass of their capital is unrepresented by an equivalent proportion of intellect and forethought. The *general* result of this, is the failure that invariably accompanies neglect, and even the works which are undertaken are never pushed with vigour, or expanded by new discoveries and inventions. These are the offspring of that anxious exertion of all the faculties of the brain which accompanies the watchful prudence of a man, who has his whole fortune

at stake, and is dependent upon his individual genius. But the holder of a joint-stock share, who throws his contribution into the general fund, and sends twice a year for his dividend, (perhaps, without receiving it,) has neither the information nor the interest that are indispensable to stimulate improvements.

Mistakes and errors are thus constantly occurring, and losses supervene ; these, on their first appearance, would alarm and deter a private individual from incurring further risk, and he would prepare, at once, to retrieve his capital ; but to the officers of a company these occurrences are matters of comparative indifference, so long as the last shilling of the paid up funds remains to meet their salaries as they fall due. And even the proprietary themselves, though conscious of the diminution of their profits, do not feel it so acutely, coming as it does off so large a fund, and are, besides, spurred on by the spirit of rivalry to incur the temporary loss, in order to drive some competing company from the field, which is

only to be done by the largeness of their transactions ; on the principle of the match-seller, who lost a trifle upon every bundle, and would be ruined were it not for the vast extent of the business which he did.

The results of this system were not slow in developing themselves in Belgium ; one by one they began to strain, break, and give way ; distrust was every hour growing blacker, when the bank of Belgium, which had been similarly formed in 1835, with a capital of twenty millions of francs, and had encouraged the establishment of some twenty or thirty other joint-stock speculations, with a capital of fifty millions more, suddenly suspended payment in 1838, and universal dismay and confusion followed ; bubbles burst in all directions, those concerns which were unsound exploded at once, and others more substantial suspended their operations, and resorted to fresh calls and loans to enable them to proceed. In the mean time, prices and the wages of labour had been fluctuating like the waves of the sea under this financial tem-

pest, at one time raised to the highest pitch by the demand for machinery created by such vast simultaneous exertions, and anon reduced below a remunerative level by the ardour of their competition with each other. Several of these companies still survive, but almost universally struggling with the difficulties in which they have involved not only themselves, but those private individuals whose steady and lucrative trade they had invaded in the rage of their speculations.

From Verviers to Eupen, the Prussian frontier, the road is high and uninteresting; it speedily leaves the charming valleys of the Vesdre behind, and comes within sight of the ruins of Limbourg, one of the most melancholy scenes of desolation I have seen —it stands lonely and apart upon the summit of a rocky eminence, the remains of what had once been a city, now a wilderness. Its rugged walls covered with green moss, scarcely a roof visible, and the remnants of its shattered fortifications flung, like a torn banner, across the sky. It has still, however, a few wretched inhabitants, who are engaged in the zinc mines in its vicinity.

It seems incredible that this stranded wreck, was once the capital of a duchy and the residence of a sovereign.

It is impossible to turn one's back upon this most interesting and enterprising country without emotions of deep anxiety as to its future destiny. Its political fortunes would require something more than ordinary foresight to predict, and the recent possibility of an European war, elicited the avowal of how slightly France would regard the treaties of 1831 or 1839, did Belgium stand for one moment in the way to obstruct her designs, either of aggression or defence. But those for whose future lot the strongest sympathy is excited, are her skilful artisans and her energetic and adventurous manufacturers and merchants. Merchants, indeed, she has but few, for nature and providence seem to have combined to render Belgium a workshop rather than a warehouse. Austria, by the base desertion of her shipping interest, in becoming a party to the closing of the Scheldt at the

treaty of Munster, compelled her to turn her attention inwardly upon herself, and to seek to replace by the loom and the hammer, that which she had lost by the annihilation of the sail and the helm. Under France, and with the all-powerful protection of Napoleon, her capabilities were developed to the fullest extent of her capital and her means, all Europe affording a market for her commodities, and creating a demand almost beyond her power to supply.

With the events of 1815, and her annexation to Holland, that vast outlet was contracted to a narrower space, and the King, on assuming the direction of his affairs, found a nation of mechanics, whom it became his province to provide with profitable employment. In the attempt to do this, it is questionable whether he did not overstep the bounds of prudence, and lead, by the system he adopted, to the further development of powers which were already simply sufficient for their functions ;

> As worldlings do, giving the sum of more
> To that which had too much—

Individual enterprise was superseded rather than assisted; and the expedients of the government tended to injure it in one respect by relieving it from the effects of its own errors, feeding it with capital, and carrying off its surplus production through societies which purchased at a handsome price to export at a loss. Even with all these appliances, her resources and powers were developed beyond the legitimate means of their employment, and the 15,000,000 of her population and colonies, whom Holland, compelled to give a preference to her productions, were inadequate to their consumption. What then must have been her condition, when in 1830, those 15,000,000 were reduced to something more than three, whilst her machinery and powers of production remained the same as before?

The new government, it must be admitted upon all hands, in spite of the murmurs of those, the evils of whose condition lay too deep for superficial remedies, such as the ministry had it in their power to apply, have left no practical expedient

untried to afford them relief, but as yet in vain; and the history of one year seems but to afford a painful contrast with the greater prosperity of that which preceded it. Money, so far as it was available, has in no case been spared. Mechanical and commercial education, both theoretical and practical, has been duly attended to; prizes and honours have been awarded to successful industry; and communications, both by highways, railroads, and canals, have been lavishly provided to invite consumption and demand; but no government can possibly afford the Belgians or procure for them, that which alone can be a fundamental remedy—*a market proportionate to their machinery.*

In every thing that is the offspring of manual labour brought to bear upon native produce, their manufactures are successful; but so soon as they are either obliged to bring their raw material from abroad, or to come into competition with the machinery of more populous countries, their advantages suddenly disappear. Thus in iron work in general, cutlery, ordinary ma-

chinery, and hardware, they excel; as well as in the production of lace and of linen yarn, in distillation or brewing, in the manufacture of furniture and paper, and, in short, in all the indispensable requisites of a home consumption. On the other hand, their coal and their iron, though abundant, lie deeper and dearer than those of their most formidable rivals in Great Britain; and copper, which is equally essential to extensive operations in machinery, they have none. Their trade would lose its pre-eminence could the Irish be once induced to adopt their processes for the preparation of flax; their cotton manufacture is in the agonies of dissolution, and their silk has already departed. Their woollens, their sugar refiners, and other once fruitful fields of enterprise and wealth, are no longer to be relied on; and, in a word, the whole frame-work of their system is labouring under a plethora, for which no ingenuity has yet sufficed to invent an effectual relief.

One expedient, may, perhaps, suggest itself, that if her manufacturing force is too

great, it should be directed into other channels, and her powers of production reduced into an accordance with her demand and consumption. But, independently of the fact, that her agriculture, which lost, equally with her artizans, an outlet in the colonies of Holland, is already overstocked, and would afford no reception to her surplus mechanics, the production of her machinery, even if reduced within the wants of a population of three or four millions, would still be undersold by those of her rivals, whose consumption extends over a vastly more extended field. England with two hundred millions of subjects in India and the West; Russia with 66,000,000; Austria with half that number; the German League with twenty-four, and France with thirty-five millions, would render it utterly beyond the power of Belgium to enter any neutral market in the world in competition with them, or even to supply her own, unless at a sacrifice.

The character of the Belgians for industry, frugality, and skill, is not surpassed by that of any artisan in the world, but

these, unfortunately, are not the only requisites to success. "The sufferings of the Belgian mechanics," says M. Briavionne, "are all referable to their unfortunate political position; but, formed in a school of long adversity, they have learned to discover, even in their misfortunes, a fountain of higher qualities, which has sustained them in their painful struggle. Prodigal in prosperity, adversity has served to teach them economy—to render them systematic, patient, and persevering. Nurtured in luxury, they have become reconciled to privations; and the Belgian manufacturer has long since learned to place his sole reliance upon untiring labour, and unyielding industry. Less adventurous than the American, or the Englishman, he has more fore-sight, moderation and patience, than them both.

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"*The condition of the population,*" *adds M. Briavionne,* "*may be thus summarily described;—of four millions of inhabitants, one*

is in independence, (l'aisance), another in want, (besoin), and the remainder floating between these two points."

But another reflection naturally forces itself upon the mind of any one who sympathises with the artisans of Belgium, generous, industrious, and deserving, as they have here been described—*who and what is it that have reduced them to this condition of suffering and privation?* The answer is but too obvious; and those who were the base instruments of their ruin, if they have not discovered the effects of their own crime, in the stagnation of all national prosperity, must, long ere this, have learned it in the "curses, not loud but deep," with which their actions are assailed, by their dupes and victims. Belgium has, years ere this, discovered the truth of the maxim, that it is—

> "—better to bear the ills we have,
> Than fly to others we know not of."

If, under the successive sovereignties of Austria and France, and as an integral

portion of that of Holland, she had not the poëtical satisfaction of being "a nation instead of a province," she had, at least, the substantial enjoyments of liberty, wealth and remunerative industry, blessings which even "hereditary bondsmen" might hesitate to exchange for bigotry, poverty and decay.

CHAPTER V.

AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

Change in the aspect of the country in crossing the frontier from Belgium into Prussia—Passports no real inconvenience—Anecdote of a Jamaica planter—First view of AIX-LA-CHAPELLE—Its population and employments—*Insurrection of the patriots in* 1830—Its absurd termination—The Cathedral of Charlemagne—Its architecture—Donation of Mary, Queen of Scots—THE TOMB OF CHARLEMAGNE—His singular mode of interment—The relics in the treasury—The Redoute—Gaming discountenanced in Prussia—*The Hotel de Ville*—Statue and fountain of Charlemagne—Environs of Aix agreeable—Political condition of the Trans-Rhenan provinces of Prussia—*Excellent posting arrangements*—Improvement suggested in England—Aspect of the country to Juliers—JULIERS—*Neuss*—Trade in crushing oil might be advantageously introduced in Ireland—The church of St. Quirinus—The Rhine.

WITHOUT any material change in the general aspect of the country, a hundred little incidental matters quickly apprize the stranger who has crossed the Belgian fron-

tier, that he has passed into Prussia. The jolting of the pavé is changed, in an instant, for the smooth roll of macadamization: instantaneously, instead of the French he has been accustomed to, he is saluted in German by the douaniers: every stake and wooden bar about the custom-house is accurately ring-streaked, like a barber's pole, only with white and black instead of crimson—and the lumbering post boy of Belgium, with a half Hibernian license of costume, is replaced by the trim postilion, in his military uniform, and trumpet slung across his shoulder, with a profusion of worsted lace and tassels. The aspect of the country, too, is different, and the broad, French-like, sweeps of hill and valley, which extend through Limbourg, became broken up into wide inclosures, diversified with abundance of woods and luxuriant plantings.

Neither the douaniers, nor the police, gave us the slightest inconvenience; the former, and without any fee, accepted our assurance that our carriage contained nothing contraband, and did not open a single

box ; the latter *visé'd* our Belgian passports without delay, and within ten minutes from passing under the barrier, we found ourselves rolling quickly, over an excellent road, to Aix-la-Chapelle. The barrier itself, by the way, is a change from the Belgian ;—a ponderous beam of wood, painted, as usual, in circular stripes of white and black, rests right across the road, and being loaded with a heavy weight at one end, is allowed to rise upon a pivot, to allow the traveller to drive under.

Throughout, not only Prussia, but Germany in general, we found the same polite facilities regarding passports, at every frontier and police station at which it was necessary to present them ; and although they were, of course, required to be formal, we had neither delay nor annoyance in their investigation. In fact, I am satisfied, from my own experience, that nine-tenths of the outcry against the "tyrannous nuisance of passports," on the continent, arises from the irregularity of those who carry them, in complying with the stated re-

quirements, or their absurd impatience of a custom, in which, though it is applied indiscriminately to all the world, their self-importance suspects something personal to themselves. An English gentleman from the West Indies, who was travelling some years ago in Switzerland, attended by a faithful negro slave was feelingly assured by him, when fuming at some annoyance of the passport system in the successive cantons, "that it was quite evident they would find no real liberty till they returned to Jamaica."

On gaining the summit of a long hill, we suddenly looked down upon the turrets and domes of the venerable and imperial city of Charlemagne, in the basin of a deep woody amphitheatre, which rises around it on all sides, covered with waving forests to the very top. No situation could be imagined more charming without anything very picturesque or magnificent. The suburbs extend a long way beyond the old fortifications, and after driving past innumerable villas and pleasant cottages, we passed

under a massy square gate surmounted by a high slated roof, and rattled along a coarse lumpy pavement through streets of dirty and desolate houses, with little appearance of either wealth, comfort, or prosperity, on any side. The most striking edifices are the huge hotels, which seem still to enjoy a pretty fair share of patronage, though Aix, like Spa, has of late years been postponed for the baths of Bohemia and the Rhine, and the majority of the travellers whom we meet in the streets are only on the wing, hastening to or returning from a visit to its more distant rivals.

Under the German empire, Aix-la-Chapelle possessed sufficient resources within itself, to enable it to support the dignity of a free imperial city. Its woollen manufactures were long famous in Europe, and the manufacture of cloth is still one of its most lucrative employments. Coals are abundant in its vicinity, and it has likewise an extensive trade in the construction of machinery, which was introduced here

by one of the ubiquitous Cockerills of Seraing. He experienced, however, in 1830, an ungenerous return for all his enterprise, his house and premises being one day sacked and plundered by a band of mutinous rioters. The population of Aix-la-Chapelle are eminently Catholic, and its working population swelled by perpetual emigrations from Verviers and Liege, were inspired with the utmost sympathy for the proceedings of the patriots of the Belgian revolution. Their character, however, was of the worst description, and a love of plunder contended with a love of country in the composition of their patriotism. The intelligence of the three days of July at Paris, had warmed this double enthusiasm to a dangerous glow, but when upon this revolution supervened the three days of September, at Brussels, their generous ardour in the cause of liberty was no longer to be restrained within common bounds; and, at length, one evening, on the arrival of the diligence from Liege with tricolor cockades on the horses' heads, the latent fires of free-

dom burst forth; even the strong walls of the prison could not restrain the patriotic ardour of its inmates, who being enlarged by their generous countrymen immediately shared with them the benefits of their previous observations, and leading them to the most promising spots for helping themselves, they proceeded amidst animating cries of "*Vive les Belges!*" and "*Vive la liberté!*" to divide the furniture and dispose of the stocks in trade of the wealthier inhabitants and shopkeepers.

Mr. Cockerill being most obnoxious as a manufacturer, who gave extensive employment to the poor, and had his mansion furnished with a degree of intolerable elegance and comfort, was speedily taught the incompatibility of such habits and enjoyments with the principles of genuine liberty; and in the course of a few hours, the contents of his residence, valued at 50,000 dollars, disappeared, and along with it the liberators took charge of his money, consisting of 135,000 francs in bank-notes, and 25,000 more in silver and gold. The progress of the patriots

was, however, checked by the appearance of their vulgar enemies, the police; a hundred and twenty of whom, under the command of a despot, named Brendamour, prevented the torch of freedom from taking its "radiant ground," and by a few discharges of musketry amongst the "liberators,"

> Repress'd their noble rage,
> And froze the genial current of their souls.

Some forty or fifty "lofty spirits" were disenthralled by this volley of the burgher guards, several others were wounded and made prisoners, but a vast number escaped across the frontiers, to unite with their kindred hearts in Belgium; and seventy, who were tried on the insulting imputation of robbery and incendiarism, were basely condemned by the Prussian authorities to undergo the inglorious punishments awarded to such offences. So ended the revolution of Aix-la-Chapelle.

Aix-la-Chapelle is still a venerable old city, especially when seen from a distance,

and its very name is connected with imperial ideas; Charlemagne and his chivalry, Kings, Emperors and Popes, wars, congresses and treaties, all of which have, at one time or another, been associated with its name. But it has now few objects of great interest within itself—its interest is with the past. Its Dom Kirke, *the* chapel whence the ancient city of Achen derived its appellation, to distinguish it from others of the same name in Savoy and Provence, like some relic from the sea encrusted with shells and parasites, is scarcely discernible in the midst of the coatings of modern buildings with which it is shut up and enveloped,— a confused agglomeration of styles, Gothic, Saxon, Byzantine and Moresco. But the central dome, the nucleus of the entire building, and that portion said to have been originally selected to cover in the Emperor's tomb, stand still erect and firm, no doubt in consequence of perpetual repairs and restorations, "a thousand years roll over it in vain," and it exhibits, unquestionably, the oldest specimen of Saxon architecture

in the world. It had been originally a simple domed octagon, with arched windows in each of its sides, and surrounded within by a gallery, sustained by pillars of porphery, from the Palace of the Exarch of Ravenna, which were carried hither by Charlemagne. These are at least identical—they have survived the ravage of the Normans, and all the subsequent ravages of Germany till the French greedy

To rive what Goth and Turk, and Time had spared,

carried them off to Paris, and as only a portion of them were ever returned, they have not yet relieved the white-washed columns by which they were replaced.

Other chapels have, at various times, been run out from the sides of the ancient centre, so that the whole is now an informal and confused mass, but without anything striking or magnificent, unless it be the large windows of the choir built about five hundred years ago, which as they rise from the founda-

tion quite to the vaulted roof give it the appearance of a gigantic conservatory. Suspended in the midst of the choir is a crown for the Virgin, the gift of Queen Mary of Scotland, and in various parts of the church are hung a greater profusion of those votive models of broken limbs and infant's marks than I have seen elsewhere.

These offerings often accompany the prayers for the recovery of the object represented, or are hung up in grateful commemoration of the event—may not the singular custom be referable to the incident of the Philistines recorded by Samuel, when in order to get rid of the emerods and the plague of mice with which they were afflicted, they were directed by "the priests and diviners" to make five golden emerods and six golden mice according to the number of their cities and their lords, and to offer them for a trespass-offering for having taken the ark captive, "for one plague was upon them and upon their lords."

But the most solemn object in "that ancient oratory" is the huge black flag that closes down the tomb of Charlemagne —it lies under the centre of the gigantic dome, beneath a huge gilded candelabrum, a gift of the Emperor Barbarossa, designed to burn above the grave of the conqueror which, bears the brief but sublime inscription in brazen letters sunk in the solid stone "CAROLO MAGNO." An extraordinary incident is connected with this impressive sepulchre. The Emperor, Otto III, two hundred years after the death of Charlemagne, caused the stone to be lifted and descended into the sepulchre of the buried monarch — he found him not prostrate in decay, but seated upon a throne of marble, covered with bosses of gold—the crown upon his bony brow—the royal dalmatic robe around his fleshless shoulders—his right hand resting on the sword, which the song of the troubadours has immortalized as the "*irrésistible Joyeuse*," and in his left the sceptre and the orb, the emblems of a dominion

which was co-extensive with the globe itself. The pilgrims pouch which he had borne in life as an emblem of humility was still hanging from his girdle, and on his knees an illuminated transcript of the gospels. The Emperor removed the regalia to Nuremberg, whence they were afterwards transferred to Vienna, and there in the imperial jewel chamber in the Schweitzer-Hof, are still to be seen the royal paraphernalia of Charlemagne, the crown set with rude uncut gems, such as may rarely be referred to a period a thousand years ago. The body was replaced in a sarcophagus of alabaster in the tomb, but, has long since disappeared, and the marble chair on which it was seated, is still shown in one of the alcoves of the gallery above.

This striking incident suggested the following lines, which were given to me by a Lady, with whose exquisite productions the public are already familiar—Mrs. Alaric A. Watts. They have not before appeared in type.

THE TOMB OF CHARLEMAGNE.

Whose is this fair sarcophogus?
A hero's shrine, a Christian's tomb;
Whose sable pall, a banner waves,
Whose canopy a minster's dome,—
What heart reposeth 'neath its shade
Whose ashes thus enshrined lie?
Ask, of the nations gathered round,
For each can make reply!

The sunny south hath heard his voice,
The frigid north his face hath seen,
The patriarch east, his foot hath trod
The barbarous west—his own hath been,
The common air proclaimed his name,
Where'ere the breath of heaven hath blown,
His sceptred galleys walked the main;
And claimed it as their own.

Still ask you of the silent guest,
Who finds in death his bed below;
Pavia,* hast thou the secret kept,
Nor thou revealed it Ronceveaux?
Brave brotherhood of Paladin's
Bear ye no witness of his reign?
Ye kingly minstrels—answer us,
Who sang of Charlemagne!

* Pavia scarcely less renowned for the prowess of Charlemagne, than the graceful gallantry of Francis I.

Say hero did thy lordly will
In death demand a monarch's throne,
To bear into eternity,
What time had made thine own!
The regal crown that prince's wear,
The royal robe—the well proved shield,
The good sword of thy red right hand,
Which only thine could wield.

Repose brave spirit for the day.
Of stormy strife hath long been o'er,
Rest till the last dread trumpet bray,
And thou awake to sleep no more.
Time hath not seen thy kindred soul,
Its roll of fame is still unfurled,
Peace to thee, rock of Chrystendom,
Whose deeds have filled the world!

Aix-la-Chapelle, as a city, is, as I have said, eminently Catholic, and the minster is at all times crowded with devotees, and objects of the most pitiable deformity. The "treasury" of the Cathedral too, is surprisingly rich in relics, girdles of the virgin, the napkin in which Herodias' daughter received the head of John the Baptist, Aron's rod, a stick of the true cross, some genuine manna from the wilderness, and a whole inventory of such other trumpery as are usu-

ally to be found in these pious "marine stores." Still the Dom Kirke is a most interesting spot, for there is a sufficiency of reality about it, to connect its present condition with the past.

Not far from the minster is one of those atrocious bagnios, the disgrace and disgust of continental watering places, a licensed hell—to the modified credit of Prussia, it is the *only one* in her dominions, and tolerated only on the humiliating representation, that were it abolished, our countrymen and others would utterly desert the baths of Aix-la-Chapelle, for the more distant Brunnens of Nassau and Baden, which would still continue the dishonoring attraction. The inhabitants themselves, however, and the officers of the garrison are strictly forbidden to cross the threshold—a striking rebuke to the crowds of strangers who frequent it. It seems to be a spacious building with no external attractions, and the lower story occupied by fancy shops and booksellers.

The Hôtel de Ville a remarkable, and

now almost ruinous old building, is said to occupy the site of the birth place of Charlemagne, and one of the lofty towers embedded in the building is ascribed to the Romans, whose bathing propensities found a thousand allurements in the hot springs of this beautiful valley. The interior contains a series of halls and saloons, in which congresses have been held, and treaties of peace negociated at various times, during the last century and the present, including that of 1818, when the allied armies were withdrawn from France. Its walls, covered with frescoes and its ceilings once richly stuccoed are now dropping into dust and decay, and the prestige of antiquity is destroyed by converting it into the bureau of the police, at the door of which a crowd of impatient English, were muttering " curses not loud but deep," upon the vexations of the passport system.

In the little square opposite it, stands a fountain of stone, surmounted by the bronze statue of Charlemagne, which has afforded a model for so many of his portraits, stand-

ing in armour, crowned, and with the orb in one hand and his renowned falchion in the other. This work of art received as usual, the sterling mark of the French virtuosi, by performing the pilgrimage to the Louvre. On either side of the fountain are two pedestals each supporting a huge bronze eagle.

Aix, as a halting place for invalids, may be a sufficiently agreeable spot for a temporary stay, the air from its situation must be mild and healthful, and the views around it are in every way charming. The merits and virtues of its waters, whatever they are, are of course as salubrious now as before the revolution of fashion, and the hills around it abound in agreeable and healthful excursions. The obelisk on the Louisberg rising immediately above the city, which was raised by Napoleon to commemorate his victories, was upturned by the Cossacks in search of the coins which they understood it to be the custom to deposit in the foundation of such erections, but was restored by the King of Prussia, and its vaunting in-

scriptions obliterated. The little village of Borcette or Burscheid, at the foot of the hill opposite the Louisberg, and about half a mile from the city gates, is another cockneyfied lounge of the citizens and invalids, with mathematical flower-beds and gravel walks in right angles and parallels. At all these places are to be found the usual pastimes, theatres, music-bands, bazaars, cafés, dancing, and all the unmeaning *petits jeus* of a watering place.

Aix-la-Chapelle is the capital of the Trans-Rhenan provinces, conferred upon Prussia at the Congress of Vienna, when they were taken out of that symmetrical boundary, which Napoleon had taught France, to look to as the natural frontier of her dominions. If no other consideration weighed with the allied sovereigns in forming the kingdom of the Netherlands, than the erection of a controlling state upon the north of France; a glance at the map might suggest to geographical politicians the singularity of connecting Prussia by one straggling line, with France on the one

hand and Prussia on the other, and the greater propriety of having added these provinces to augment the importance of the newly-erected state, to whose manufacturing interests, the boon of an additional million and a half of consumers, would have been an important acquisition. It is just probable that such a disposition might have given it greater permanence, though it would have been by establishing from the first a preponderance of the Roman Catholic party to the prejudice of the Dutch Protestants. As it is, however, the feelings of the people themselves, so far as my enquiries were accurately answered, are those of perfect contentment with their present position; and the firm but temperate resolution of the late King, Prussia has as yet been perfectly successful in satisfying them as to the nature of their real interests. The absurd and drunken riots I have alluded to in 1830, and the contumacious audacity of the Archbishop of Cologne two years back, are the only instances I have heard of disaffection or insubordination.

We staid during our visit to Aix-la-Chapelle at an admirable hotel, the "Grand Monarque," large enough to lodge a whole hospital of invalids, whether suffering from one or other of the "maladies Anglaises," consumption or ennui. In the morning when we were to take our departure for Dusseldorff, we found, after waiting an hour for the arrival of our horses from the posting office, that the waiter over night had neglected his instructions to order them, when a delay of nearly an hour had to take place till our passports could be sent to the chief of the department and the error rectified.

An admirable regulation prevails throughout the entire of Germany with regard to posting, which might, with the best effect, be introduced in England, and without any government interference in the affair. Before starting, the post master, who is an officer of the crown, delivers to the traveller a printed form signed by himself, and specifying the items of every charge for the stage he is setting out upon, the distance, the number of horses, the mileage, and the

tolls ; this, if erroneous, is corrected on the spot, and the stranger is thus freed from all wrangling or apprehension of imposture. The posting tariff, at the same time, regulates the "*trinkgelt*," the fee of the postillion, which is but five silver groschen, or six-pence for a German mile containing four and two-thirds English ; but this the traveller is expected, though he must not be *solicited* to exceed, provided he is satisfied with the performance of his post-boy, and in general double the amount, or at the utmost three-half-pence per mile will excite a lively gratitude.

The face of the country, between Aix-la-Chapelle and the Rhine, without being picturesque in any degree, is proverbially rich and luxuriant, especially the ancient Duchy of Juliers, now extinguished, which surrounds the fortified city of the same name. Every town and village we passed through was but a congregation of agricultural dwellings—every building was converted into a barn—and even from the windows of some ruinous towers, we saw the projecting

sheaves of the early harvest, which had been already gathered in.

Juliers, where we breakfasted, is a fortified city, built in the midst of an apparently swampy level, but so begirt and encompassed with ramparts and fosses, that it is said to be impregnable to every assault but that of starvation. We drove over drawbridges and under covered ways without end; the passage winding from side to side, till it seemed to issue in the opposite direction from that at which it entered the side of the fortification, and wehalted for an excellent breakfast at a most unpromising inn, the "Drei Königen," in the centre of the town, which as Juliers is the highway to Dusseldorff and Cologne, was beset by diligences and calèches of every conceivable shape and model. Juliers has no trade, and its sole support seems to be the regular victualling of a garrison of 3,000 Prussians, and the almost equally regular reception of twice as many English tourists on wing to the Rhine, or returning from it.

Between Juliers and Neuss, on the banks of the river, we scarcely saw an acre of pasture land or meadow, all seemed to be under cultivation, and the wonder is, where they find fodder for their cattle, unless they have been effectually weaned off all appreciation of grass or clover. Neuss is a bustling, industrious little community of some four or five thousand inhabitants, busily engaged in the manufacture of linen and woollen cloth, and having numerous mills for an operation that I am surprised is not attempted in Ireland, the crushing of vegetable oils. At a time when the capture of whales is said to be becoming most precarious, and the demand is increased beyond expectation by the augmentation of machinery and the increase of railroads, which seem to have more than counterbalanced the introduction of gas, it would surely be found as lucrative in the rich soil of Ireland as that of Flanders or the Rhine, to grow hemp and colza with a view to express the oil for the consumption. A windmill, such as one sees thousands of in

Holland and Belgium, with all the machinery for this purpose, can be put up, I understand, for £150, or even less.

Neuss is mentioned by Tacitus as Novesium, and Drusus is said to have constructed a bridge across the Rhine above the town, at the same spot where there is now a swinging bridge to convey passengers to Dusseldorff. It has a very remarkable church, the steeple of which serves as a pedestal for a large and spirited statue of St. Quirinus, who with an unfurled flag in his hand, performs double duty as its patron and weather-cock. The building itself is of some Saxon or Norman architecture, closely resembling that of Charlemagne at Aix-la-Chapelle, and underneath it is a singular crypt, with groined arches, supported by low truncated columns, and having altogether an air of the remotest antiquity.

About a mile and a half from the town, we drove upon the platform of the swinging bridge, along with a crowd of horses, cattle and foot passengers, and in less than five minutes were carried over by the mere

action of the rapid current to the opposite side, where a drive of another mile or two through gardens and suburbs, brought us to the Breitenbacher-Hof, in the central square of Dusseldorff.

THE END.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

COMPARATIVE PRICES OF MACHINERY IN BELGIUM AND IN GREAT BRITAIN.

As the question of permitting the free export of machinery from this country, occupies at present much of the attention of the British legislature, and its policy cannot be safely estimated without a knowledge of the comparative rates at which the same article can be produced on the continent and with us—in other words, what advantage the mill-owners and manufacturers of Great Britain enjoy, at the present moment, in the outlay for the erection of their works—I have been at some pains to ascertain its relative value in Belgium and in Manchester, and the following extracts, of the prices at the Phœnix works of Ghent, is contrasted with the cost of the same articles in England, as furnished to me by an eminent machine-maker of Manchester.

	BELGIAN PRICES.			ENGLISH PRICES.	
	Francs	£.	s.	£.	s.
COTTON MACHINERY.					
Blowing machine, new plan, 36 inches wide	1500	60	..	38	..
Ditto, 2 beaters, 2 wire cylinders, 36 inches	3000	120	..	72	..
Lap machine, 18 to 20 inches wide	1375	55	..	55	..
Lap machine and blowing machine united, 36 inches	4000	160	..	120	..
Fan serving for 2 or 3 beaters	400	16	..	10	..
Double card, cylinders and flats in mahogany	685	27	10	26	..
Patent English card by J. Smith	4000	160	..	100	..
Large double card, 44 inches broad	4100	164	..	100	..
Grinding machine for slackening the top cards	700	28	..	26	..

	BELGIAN PRICES.			ENGLISH PRICES.	
	Francs	£.	s.	£.	s.
Patent machine for stripping the main cylinder	325	13	..	9	..
Slivering machine	850	34	..	24	..
Drawing frame of 4 to 10 heads, 3 row rollers, per head	195	7	16	6	..
Slotting machine, 28 spindles	2025	81	..	67	..
Roving frames of 48 spindles, driven by bands, three rows, 9 rollers, double slides, expansive pulleys	2300	92	..	74	..
ube frame of J. C. Dyer, 16 to 24 T tubes, per tube	150	6	..	5	..
Mule jenny of 240 to 264 spindles, per spindle	6¼	..	5s. 2¼d.	3	..
Flax and Tow Machinery.					
Heckling machine, complete with hackles	1200	48	..	34	..
Double cutter machine	1200	48	..	36	..
Circular heckling machine, for cut flax	1741	69	12	42	..
Preparation of Long Flax.					
	Francs Chain	Francs Spiral	Chain	Spiral	Chain	Spiral
1st drawing or spreading machine	1800	2500	£72	£100	£56	£65
2nd drawing 2 heads, 2 slivers each, per head	1000	1350	£40	£54	£37	£40
Roving frames, drag principle, per spindle	305	345	£12	£13	£10	£11
Regulating motion	330	370	£13	£14	£10	£11
Preparation of Tow.						
			£.	s.	£.	s.
Batting or opening machine	500	..	20	..	15	..
Beetle	500	..	20	..	15	..
Cards (breakers) 48 inch diameter, per inch	70	..	2	16	2	10
Diameter of rollers. Lift of bobbin. Pitch.						
1½ in. 2 in. 2½ in. per spindle.	34	1	7	..	18s. 6d.	
2 in. 2 in. 2¾ in. „ „	36f.50c	1	9	1		

	BELGIAN PRICES.			ENGLISH PRICES.	
	Francs	£	*s.*	£	*s.*
2½ in.... 2½ in... 3 in. per spindle.	39	1	11	1	2*s.* 6*d.*
3 in..... 3 in.... 3 in. „ „	39	1	11	1	2*s.* 6*d.*
If the back rollers be of brass instead of wood, the price will be increased per spindle.	2	..	1*s.* 7*d.*	..	6*d.*
Reel, 40 spindles	250	10	..	10	..
Bundling machine.	600	24	..	15	..

The following is a list of some other articles used in various branches of manufactures with the prices at Ghent.

	Francs
Machine a bobiner des échevettes à 80 bobines.....	600
Idem, des échevettes et des fusieaux à 80 bobines..	638
Idem, des fuseaux ou Winding Machine, à 80 bobines, systême Anglais..	530
Machine à Ourdir, ou Warping Machine, systême Anglais, de la largeur de 107 à 150 centimètres dans le rot	520
Machine à Parer, ou Dressing Machine, systême écossais perfectionné, large 107 centimètres dans le rot	1610
Idem, même construction, large 108 centimètres, dans le rot....	1655
Idem, même construction, large 129 centimètres dans le rot.....	1710
Idem, même construction, large 152 centimètres dans le rot.....	1810
Idem, systême Anglais perfectionné, large 107 centimètres dans le rot.....	1400
Métier à Tisser, ou Power Loom, dernier systême perfectionné, pour calicots unis, large 107 centimètres under pick ou over pick.....	255
Idem, pour calicots croisés, large 107 centimètres dans le rot ...	290
Idem, pour calicots unis, large 118 centimètres dans le rot....	264
Idem, pour calicots unis, large 129 centimètres dans le rot.....	274
Idem, pour calicots croisés, de 118 centimètres dans le rot.....	300
Idem, pour calicots croisés de 129 centimètres dans le rot.....	310
Idem, pour calicots unis de 152 centimètres dans le rot.....	289
Idem, pour calicots croisés de 152 centimètres dans le rot (lorsque les métiers à tisser sont demandés avec double ensouple, le prix augmente de 12 francs par métier. L'atelier construit toutes les largeurs que l'on indique).....	325
Dandy Loom, ou métier à tisser à la main.....	130
Métier a Tisser mécaniquement les velours, piloux, cuir Anglais, et autres étoffes.....	450
Machine à plier et les étoffes.....	

MÉCANIQUES DIVERSES.

	Francs
Machine à carder les piloux, brevetée en Angleterre, récemment introduite	1250
Machine longitudinale à tondre les piloux, largeur 70 à 73 centimètres	1800
Calandre en fonte à double levier, avec deux rouleaux en papier, un rouleau creux en fonte, poli pour lustrer	3000
Presse Hydraulique à piston de 6 pouces de diamêtre avec deux pompes en cuivre de la force de 64,000 kilogrammes	2050
Presses Hydrauliques, de la même construction, de 64,000 jusqu'à 300 mille kilogrammes. Les prix en sont établis suivant leur degré de force	
Filtre en fer, breveté, pour raffineries de sucre, à deux plateaux	1400
Idem, même construction, à trois plateaux	1685
Balance à bascule portative, système Américain, nouvellement introduit, à l'usage des manufactures, forges, maisons de roulage, etc	
Idem, à pont fixé sur maçonnerie propre à la pesée des voitures	
Moulin, pour moudre la drèche à l'usage des brasseurs	
Laminoirs pour le plomb en toute dimension	
Roues hydrauliques en fer, moleurs ou objets pour mouvements, tels que arbres, chaises, supports, poulies de toutes dimensions, engrenages de toutes espèces	
Plans de Fondations et de dispositions générales pour toute industrie	

NOTA.—La couverture des cilindres de pression et les garnitures de cardes ne sont pas comprises dans les prix du tarif. Les machines sont prises dans nos ateliers, l'emballage, le transport et le montage sont à charge de l'acquéreur.

Les conditions de payement sont: ⅓ du total de la commande en donnant l'ordre, le second tiers au moment de l'expédition. (Pour l'étranger,) à condition qu'une maison belge se constitue garant du dernier tiers, payable trois mois après l'expédition, (toutes les mesures sont anglaises).

No. II.

INSTRUCTIONS

FOR THE

CULTIVATION OF FLAX,

AND THE

PREPARATION OF LINEN,

Circulated amongst the Peasantry of Flanders, by the Société Linière of Brussels.

(TRANSLATED FROM THE FLEMISH ORIGINAL).

FROM the information collected in France, in Lille and in Paris, one important fact can be deduced, that Belgium *may* preserve her incontestible superiority in the linen manufacture; but that to do so, she must, more than ever, make it a point to manufacture goods of that sterling and solid quality, to which she owes her reputation. We have, in consequence, to request all the committees of the different districts of the Association to unite with us in awakening the attention of the growers, the spinners, the manufac-

turers, the bleachers, and those who finish the linen and make it up, each in his own department, and to bring under their notice every point in which it may be possible to improve the old systems.

It is particularly necessary that every means should be adopted to bring it specially before the manufacturers, that it is impossible they can preserve our interesting manufacture in its ancient splendour, unless they give the most constant care to make a better and more solid article than the manufacturers of other countries, and that they cannot continue to attract foreign merchants to our markets, unless they rigorously abstain from any fraud or deception.

Sometimes the teeth of the reeds are at unequal distances; again, acids of a corroding nature are used in the process of bleaching the yarn, to the detriment of the quality. It is necessary to convince those who may co-operate in frauds of this nature, or in any deception whatever, that in doing an injury to the nation, in the national manufacture, they are injuring themselves; and that, on the other hand, those who may assist in re-establishing the ancient renown of Belgium in the manufacture of linen, will be the first to reap its fruits.

With this end, and to lay the foundation for the accomplishment of this object, we now submit the following observations, which have been suggested by a voyage in Germany, in which minute attention was paid to the different processes of manufacture, as practised in that country. We recommend them to the serious attention of all the spinners,

manufacturers and merchants, and will eagerly receive from them any ideas or information, which experience may enable them to transmit to us, to aid in the compilation of definitive instructions.

CULTURE OF THE FLAX.

In the districts of Courtrai, St. Nicholas, and Tournai, flax is cultivated in perfection, but nowhere else is the cultivation what could be wished. Thus, the culture of flax has increased, without the art of cultivation making any progress. The quality of the flax, even the abundance of the crop, depends much upon the selection of the seed. In general, the seed which we import from the North, succeeds, but for a few years past, the merchants engaged in the business have taken advantage of the confidence reposed in them by the farmers. What they sold as genuine Riga seed, was, really a mixture. Thus, in several districts where it was sown, the crop sprang up but partially and imperfectly. The committee will take measures to give the farmer more security in his purchases, and adopt means to import direct genuine Riga seed.

It has been observed, that when the seed is sown early, as soon as the season permits germination, the crop is always better, both in quantity and quality. Experience, also, teaches that good tillage and abundance of manure, have a great influence on the quality of the crop. The spade should be used in preference to the plough, as it pulverizes the ground

better. This it is which makes it so difficult to cultivate flax in large quantities, and in a number of acres together.

On the fineness of the stalk, depends the fineness of the fibre. To obtain, therefore, fine flax, the seed must be sown very thickly, which can only be done where the soil is well manured and properly tilled.

It has been proved that when the flax is pulled between the falling of the flower and the formation of the seed, the fibre is finer and more solid than at any other time, so that unless it is wished to sacrifice the quality of the flax to obtain seed, the former must not await the full maturity of the latter.

Above all things the rotation of crops must be scrupulously observed; if seven or eight years be allowed to elapse before again sowing flax in the same field, it is certain that there will be a good crop; but the less the interval between the two crops, the less is the second to be calculated on either for quality or weight.

We need not observe how necessary it is to the production of good flax, that the weeding of the fields should be attended to with great care.

WATERING.

In Belgium this process is conducted under two different systems. At Courtrai, when pulled, it is allowed to dry on the field, and is kept over all winter before steeping. In this district, as is well known, the flax is steeped in the clear

and running waters of the Lys, where it is perfectly pure from any slime or mud.

In the Flanders district (Pays de Waes), the flax is steeped immediately after pulling, being put in the water whilst still green, the water used being stagnant. We think that in general the preference must be given to the system employed in Flanders; firstly, because it is difficult to find such a river as the Lys, where the waters are so free from any filth; and secondly, because the flax when steeped before it dries is softer and more mellow, and the fibre is whiter, not having that yellow tint which is always found in flax that has been dried. The linens which we saw in Germany were of a pure and silvery white, and the system pursued there in steeping is that of Flanders. It was pointed out to us that the fibre of flax which had been dried is equally strong, but that it is harder and more yellow. Steeping in the manner followed in Flanders demands great care and attention, and a particular knowledge of the process. As it is not possible for us to explain all the details, we will confine ourselves to requesting the district committees to send us from Flanders some persons competent to give all the instructions necessary for performing it with success.

After the steeping, it is found to improve the quality to keep the flax for a long time in the straw. The older the flax is the better it is. If before it had any faults; if, for example, it had been spotted, and a bad colour from being badly exposed, it becomes equalized and uniform by remaining for a long time in the straw heaped together.

It is good to keep over the flax before spinning it, not only in the straw, but after scutching, and even after hackling. The Germans attach great importance to having a soft and silky fibre. To this end they beat the flax after it is scutched, they rub it with an iron comb without teeth, and they are especially careful to let it grow old, either in straw or after it has been scutched.

SPINNING.

As a general and incontestible rule, it is necessary in order to make good yarn, to proportion the quality of the flax to the description of yarn to be spun. If fine yarn be produced from flax of an inferior quality, the quality of the yarn, and necessarily the cloth, will be bad. It is then a very prejudicious idea, that with any kind of flax, fine yarn can be produced. It is equally necessary to hackle the flax, according to the fineness and quality of the yarn to be spun. The finer and better the yarn to be produced, the more should the tow be separated from the solid fibres. Great care should be given to the process of spinning—it is the fingers that spin, the wheel only twists. The length of the fibre contributes much to the solidity of the yarn, it is, therefore, important to place the flax upon the distaff so that the spinner can always take the fibre by the end, and not by the middle. This observation has been made in France, in the neighbourhood of Valenciennes and Cambrai, where the good yarn for lace is produced. The

spinning wheel should be adapted to the description of the yarn to be produced, the smaller the *wheel*, the more open and flat will be the yarn. The larger it is, the more the yarn is round and twisted. There is this distinction to make between warp and weft, that the former requires to be more twisted than the latter. To make good cloth, the thread of the warp should be round, that of the weft flat and open. Yarn for thread should be more twisted than the other descriptions. This is the reason that at Lempleuve wheels of great diameter, and turned by three cords, are used.

At a moment in which mill-spun yarn, the rival production to hand-spun yarn, lays claim to a superiority, which it bases upon the uniform equality of its thread, the hand-spinners must strain every nerve to attain this equality. It is essential that they avoid, as much as possible, any knots or lumps in the yarn, that they extract any particles of tow their fingers may meet. We could also recommend that the operation may be conducted with extreme cleanliness, that any stains of oil, coal, &c., be avoided, or anything which may be difficult to remove in the bleaching. The Germans beat their yarn a good deal before weaving it, to render it more soft and supple, they affirm that they thereby improve the quality of the cloth. According to them, the softer and more yielding the yarn, the firmer and more solid will be the cloth when bleached, it has not the disadvantage of being too hard and stiff, and, therefore, fraying at the folds. The system may be the object of experiment. It is,

also, useful to prepare the yarn by boiling it in a solution of alkali, and by soaking it in milk. Ashes from beech wood are to be preferred to those from ash. This is at least the result of their experience in Germany. We submit the observation to our merchants and manufacturers, to induce them to make a trial, and to communicate to us afterwards the result. The use of any chemical agent in bleaching must be rigorously abstained from, their use has been constantly prohibited by our ancient laws, and even by royal edicts.

WEAVING.

The piece of cloth should be throughout uniform in fabric, and in colour. It is then indispensable, as well for the weft as for the warp, to use yarn from the same description of flax. There must be none of those dry and dead fibres, so that they do not disappear in the bleaching.

The warp and the weft should be as much as possible each spun from the same specimen.

Numerous complaints are raised against the manufacturers of reeds and against the weavers; the latter do not give sufficient attention to the weaving, and some of them use fraudulent means. Thus the reeds have sometimes not the sufficient number of teeth; again, sometimes one part of the web is well, and another badly woven, with, as regards the number of threads and the workmanship. Frauds of this kind are pointed out at nearly every market; they were formerly punished by regulations of police, but

these preventive measures exist but in a few of the markets, and there incompletely. It would be well that the municipal administrations, who have public markets of linen, would revive them vigorously to give again confidence to the trade. We will, hereafter, give the details of these old laws. The measure to be taken relative to the regulations for the weaving are under the consideration of the direction of the committee and the consul general; they are seeking means to put a stop to the fraudulent manufactures which unfortunately have been numerous of late years, and which would end, after having ruined the commerce, by entirely destroying the manufacture, and taking away from the country an important source of occupation and existence.

It is still complained of some weavers that they neglect the care of cleanliness: they should bear in mind that cloth stained with oil, or of which the warp has been dressed with any greasy substance, as is commonly the case, cannot be perfectly bleached.

Another complaint against many weavers is, that they use pumice stone to give a gloss to the cloth, not remarking that it injures it considerably.

In Germany they do not employ mill spun yarn, it is there considered that it can only produce bad cloth.

It is quite necessary to improve the construction of the looms; when a loom is straight and well placed, a woman can manage it as easily as a man. With a good loom more work can be done per day. The most essential part to observe is, that the part which drives the weft should be

always horizontal. Soon each of the District Committee will have a loom on a new model, so that they may show it to all the weavers. The director of the committee has caused some looms to be brought from Bielefield, he is, at the same time, engaged in improving the one in general use, which he thinks is defective in many parts. On this subject the District Committee are requested to assist the director by sending from their respective districts a dexterous mechanic to give his opinion on the proposed improvements.

For the sizing of the warp, the Germans use a paste made of flour, the same as we do. In general they employ *rye flour* for plain linen, but very carefully sifted. For fancy or damask cloth they use wheat flour. We may again remark that they pay great attention to the sifting, so that no seed may be in the paste. The work-rooms should be suitable to the quality of the work, better lit and consequently more airy. The workmen have every thing to gain in preserving a precious health for their family; a robust man can do more work than an invalid. In Germany the work-rooms contain four looms with ease, and are lit by glass windows the same as the shops in our towns. We remind all that when a work-room is well arranged, and when everything is in its place, the work is done with more perfection, more regularity, and, finally, with more economy.

BLEACHING.

The Germans pay great attention to the first washing of the linen, in which they use a fluted beetle, fixed so as to rub the cloth, without striking it or bruising it too rudely. They shun all chemical agents, they use water from the purest sources, and constantly renew it. The sizing is effected with a starch, made at Cologne. We brought a sample of it, which we keep for the inspection of all; it is thought to be of a better quality than ours; and I am inclined to believe, that it is to the superior starch that the German linens owe their silky gloss. The drying is effected in lofts, well constructed and spacious, where the cloth is protected as well from the sun as from the rain. They employ rollers for stretching and turning the linen, which make every movement easy. We desire to see our bleachers imitate the Germans in the care which they bestow on the details of the operations which we have just examined.

CALENDERING.

No one is ignorant that, with us, this process is far from perfect. We must, then, call the attention of those who practice it, to the improvements that their machines call for. On this subject, the Director is ready to communicate all the ideas he has gathered. The calender or mangle which the Germans use, is sixty feet long, eight or nine broad, and fifteen high. A box, filled with stones, supported by two

wooden cylinders, of six or seven inches in diameter, is moved backward and forward, alternately, upon a wooden plank, perfectly level; the linen is rolled round the wooden cylinders, and remains there for a quarter of an hour. This system gives a flat finish, the cloth being dry, and passing without heat.

At Bielefield there exists another machine, called "the English Beetling Machine," by which a rounder finish is obtained than by the calender, and which increases, momentarily, at least, the width of the cloth. In this operation, the linen, when dried and folded, is placed on a table of polished stone, and beetled by heavy mallets.

ATTENTION PAID TO THE SALE.

To facilitate the sale of their linens, the Germans think themselves obliged to resort to the seduction of the fold, the envelope, and even the colour of the paper. We can affirm, that attention to all these little points, produces excellent results.

No. III.

PETITION

OF THE

COTTON MANUFACTURERS AND CALICO PRINTERS OF BELGIUM

TO THE

CHAMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES.

December 1839.

A MESSIEURS LES MEMBRES DE LA CHAMBRE DES REPRÉSENTANTS.

Le 10 Septembre 1835, la Chambre des Représentants, dont faisait déjà partie la majorité de l'assemblée actuelle, a déclaré que l'Industrie Cotonnière dans sa généralité, n'était pas suffisamment protégée. Cette déclaration a été faite après enquête et discussion. Tout aussitôt le Ministre des finances a promis de présenter un projet de loi qui remplirait le vœu que la législature venait d'émettre ; et chacun dès-lors se tint dans l'attente de la mesure promise.

Quatre années sont maintenant écoulées; il n'a plus été question ni du projet du Ministre, ni de la déclaration de la Chambre, de cette déclaration qui pourtant renfermait un projet de haute sollicitude et que l'on ne rappelle ici que comme un témoignage de la prévoyance, qui animait cette assemblée lorsqu'elle fut appelée à se prononcer sur la situation et l'avenir de l'une des branches de travail les plus importantes du pays.

En effet, Messieurs les Réprésentants, ce qui s'est passé depuis le jour, où a été donné ce témoignage d'intérêt, et la situation présente, tout vient à l'appui du jugement qui a été porté dans votre enceinte. Tout a renforcé l'opinion alors émise. Veuillez en être juges: Au milieu de l'immense élan que la production manufacturière a prise en Belgique, à compter de 1835, l'Industrie Cotonnière s'est consumée en efforts inutiles pour participer à ce mouvement. En 1835, 1836, 1837, et 1838, sa production s'est élevée un peu au-dessus des années 1831, 1832, 1833 et 1834, mais elle n'a pu retrouver l'importance que l'année 1829 et le commencement de 1830 lui avaient donnée. Elle est restée à la seconde époque, surtout quant aux résultats, beaucoup au-dessous de la première. Nous sommes à même d'en fournir la preuve par des documents incontestables.

Et cependant depuis 1835 de nouveaux capitaux ont été versés dans l'Industrie Cotonnière, sans doute parce qu'il semblait à chacun que le gouvernement ne pouvait différer longtemps de se conformer à la politique commerciale que

lui avaient tracée les Chambres en plusieurs circonstances, et notamment dans la séance du 10 Septembre. A compter de cette époque, les procédés des filateurs et des imprimeurs furent améliorés, renouvelés en partie; des voyages d'observation entrepris à l'étranger pour mettre le pays quant aux méthodes et aux machines au niveau de ses concurrents. Et remarquez-le bien, Messieurs les Représentants, ces dépenses ont été faites, non dans des espérances de bénéfices, il ne nous a pas été possible d'en faire; mais nous agissions dans un esprit de conservation; c'est pour l'intérêt de notre existence même que nous faisions ces efforts. Et c'est ce qui explique comment le nombre des Power-Looms s'est considérablement accru.

C'est aussi ce qui explique les perfectionnements de détail introduits dans les filatures et dans les fabriques d'impressions. Plus d'une fois, ceux-là même qui obéissant à des préventions inspirées par des doctrines creuses et subversives de toute prospérité, se sont constitués les adversaires de l'Industrie Cotonnière, l'ont reconnu; seulement ils ont prétendu en tirer argument contre nous. Ils ont dit que toutes ces améliorations étaient un indice de prospérité; qu'elles allaient ouvrir la voie à de nouveaux profits; qu'ainsi le régime douanier auquel est soumise notre branche d'industrie était excellent; qu'il fallait se garder d'y porter atteinte. On n'a malheureusement que trop obéi à ces inspirations!

Les faits, mais des faits irrécusables détruisent de fond en comble ces chimériques assertions.

De 1829 à 1838, l'Industrie Cotonnière a suivi en Angleterre, en France, en Allemagne, aux Etats-Unis, une marche ascensionnelle accablante pour notre pays, lorsqu'on la compare à l'état dans lequel nous sommes restés. L'accroissement roule de 50 à 75 p. c., suivant des calculs officiels que nous publierons plus tard. Et malgré l'influence que l'accroissement de la population a du avoir sur la consommation intérieure, la Belgique est en 1838, au-dessous de la production de 1829; au-dessous non seulement pour les profits, ceci est hors de doute, mais même pour l'importance.

Permettez-nous d'appeler votre attention sur d'autres circonstances de détail, mais qui vont rendre notre démonstration plus frappante.

Il y avait à Bruxelles en 1830, quatre filatures de premier ordre en activité. En 1839, il n'en reste qu'une et celle-là même ne marche pas encore.

De plus, quatre filatures de second ordre ont dans le même temps disparu de cette localité. Parmi les propriétaires de ces établissements, ceux qui ne sont pas tombés en déconfiture, ont profité d'incendies qui sont venus dévorer leurs fabriques, pour se retirer d'une industrie où l'expérience est inutile et où le travail semble à tout jamais condamné à la plus désolante stérilité. Il faut toutefois excepter celle de messieurs Prévinaire et Seny, filatures de 6000 broches, passée à la Hollande, et cela en 1836, à l'époque même où l'on soutient que dans notre pays cette branche d'industrie prospérait. Qui pourrait voir rien de

volontaire dans de pareils déplacements, dans de semblables liquidations? Comment affirmer que des faits de cette nature ne cachent rien de désastreux?

A la face du pays et la main sur la conscience, nous déclarons que l'Industrie Cotonnière a constamment langui depuis 1830. Notre intime conviction est qu'elle est atteinte d'un mal organique, sous lequel elle succombe lentement; elle marche à sa ruine; et la cause principale existe dans l'inexécution de la politique commerciale tracée par vous.

Essayera-t-on encore de combattre cette vérité? On n'a déjà entassé que trop de sophismes et de mensonges pour l'obscurcir. L'industrie Cotonnière souffre et dépérit, a-t-on dit, la faute en est aux fabricants qui ne savent pas profiter des avantages que notre position topographique leur offre et qui refusent d'exploiter les débouchés qui leur sont ouverts.—Vous ne le croirez pas, Messieurs les Représentants. Il vous répugnera d'admettre que des fabricants vieillis dans l'étude de leur profession et dans la pratique des affaires commerciales, soient capables de repousser avec une stupide opiniâtreté les occasions de profit qu'ils auraient sous la main et fermeraient l'oreille à des conseils que dicterait la connaissance réelle des marchés lointains. Eh quoi! tandis qu'en Belgique tous les industriels jouissent d'une réputation de vigilance justement acquise, tandis qu'autour de nous tous les peuples rendent justice à l'excellence de notre coup-d'œil, à la supériorité de notre esprit pratique, de notre savoir industriel, ceux-là seulement qui ap-

partiennent à l'Industrie Cotonnière feraient exception à la règle commune! Seraient-ils donc sortis d'une race autre que celle qui jadis, après avoir approvisionné toutes les contrées de leurs étoffes, surent donner leurs artisans pour maîtres à toutes les nations?

Si donc, Messieurs, l'on vous disait que la détresse de l'Industrie n'est le résultat que de l'ignorance, de l'entêtement ou de l'apathie, de votre propre mouvement vous sauriez en mettre la cause ailleurs. Et en effet, pour apprécier la valeur des hommes qu'on traite avec tant de dédain et si peu de pitié, voici ce qui vous frapperait d'abord:

Depuis 1825, de graves écarts ont été commis en industrie; on a fait plus d'un faux pas. L'industrie Cotonnière s'est abstenue de toute extravagance. Elle ne s'est pas laissé émouvoir; et se tenant soigneusement en dehors de tout calcul d'agiotage, elle est restée attachée aux principes de morale qui seuls fécondent le travail. Elle ne s'est trouvée mêlée à toute cette agitation que pour voir renchérir tous les objets de première nécessité.

Cependant une crise est arrivée. Dans ce moment critique pour le pays, l'Industrie Cotonnière a su encore conserver une assez bonne attitude. Au milieu de nombreuses catastrophes, ceux de ses établissements qui marchaient encore sont restés debout. Les hommes qui se sont conduits ainsi n'étaient assurément pas des industriels incapables.

Mais à la suite de ces circonstances calamiteuses et nonob-

stant tous les préparatifs qu'en hommes prévoyants ils avaient faits pour tenir tête à l'orage, ils se sentent aujourd'hui lentement et douloureusement minés par le mal contre lequel, tant de fois déjà depuis 1830, ils ont lutté avec plus de constance que de succès.

Ils se sentent dominés, écrasés par l'industrie étrangère Le marché intérieur chaque jour leur échappe et chaque jour aussi se resserre devant eux l'espace qui leur restait au dehors pour écouler leurs produits.

Par là se trouve pleinement confirmée la déclaration parlementaire de 1835 que l'Industrie Cotonnière n'est pas suffisamment protégée, que la législation douanière est insuffisante.

Veuillez prendre la peine, Messieurs, de réfléchir sur la situation de l'Industrie Cotonnière et vous reconnaîtrez ce qu'elle a de singulier et à première vue d'inexplicable. Nous sommes tout aussi habiles que nos concurrents de l'étranger; la situation topographique de la Belgique est avantageuse; à certains égards, nous pourrions travailler avec autant ou plus d'économie que beaucoup d'industriels d'autres contrées; et cependant, si l'on ne doit rien changer à l'état de choses actuel, il nous est bien décidément impossible de soutenir la concurrence. La lutte nous deviendra mortelle à la longue.

Et pourrait-il en être autrement? Nous partageons notre marché intérieur avec nos voisins, nous ne pouvons pas aller partager le marché de nos voisins avec eux. Ils viennent chez nous, nous n'allons pas chez eux. Il y a là une

cause constante d'inégalité, car nos concurrents commencent par réaliser chez eux des bénéfices qui les mettent à même de vendre à plus bas prix en Belgique. La véritable économie pour un fabricant est de produire le plus qu'il peut dans un temps donné. Pour vendre à bon marché, il faut vendre beaucoup, c'est une vérité démontrée. Or, notre consommation est trop minime, réduite qu'elle est par les introductions étrangères. Pour les impressions, par exemple, les frais de gravure d'un rouleau sont les mêmes en France et en Angleterre qu'en Belgique. Avec le même rouleau un fabricant français fera 500 pièces ; un fabricant anglais 5000; un imprimeur belge n'en fera quelquefois que 50. Il en est des impressions sur étoffes comme des impressions sur papier; le livre qu'on tire à un nombre considérable d'exemplaires, se vend à peu de chose près pour le coût du papier. Les étoffes imprimées qui arrivent de France ou d'Angleterre en Belgique, s'offrent à un prix qui représente la valeur du calicot.

C'est surtout en temps de crise qu'il devient impossible aux fabricants belges de résister à cette concurrence écrasante. Ce qui par dessus tout fait du mal à notre industrie, ce sont les soldes de magasin, que périodiquement nos rivaux de France et d'Angleterre envoient dans notre pays, avec ordre de s'en défaire à tous prix. Tel tissu de coton imprimé qui au printemps aura été vendu par eux à 3 fr. l'aune, fera partie huit à neuf mois plus tard de ces envois de pacotille qu'on sera content de vendre à un 1 fr. 50 et même 1 fr. 25 l'aune. Voilà donc les cotons les plus fins

et les plus chers, mis en concurrence directe avec les articles courants du pays. Les fabricants étrangers, avant de commencer une nouvelle campagne avec leurs dessins nouveaux, font maison nette de ce qui leur reste en magasin ; et c'est particulièrement la Belgique qu'ils inondent, car ils ne veulent pas gâter les prix sur leur marché principal, qu'ils se réservent à eux seuls. A tout prix ils doivent donc exporter ; et par sa situation, la Belgique est à portée de tous.

Plus la mévente est générale chez nos voisins et plus l'inconvénient que nous signalons devient ruineux pour notre pays. Nous souffrons de nos crises, nous souffrons encore plus de celles de l'étranger ; car si jusqu'à un certain point, on peut avec de la sagacité voir venir les premières, comment prévoir les secondes ? En ce moment ce n'est pas à 1 fr. 50, ni à 1 fr. 25 l'aune que les impressions de Mulhouse sont offertes en Belgique, on les obtient facilement à 1 fr. 10 l'aune de France, faisant l'équivalent de 64 centimes pour l'aune de Brabant ; et c'est à ce prix avili que des voyageurs, après les avoir fait entrer moyennant 8½ p. c. de prime de fraude, transport compris,* les colportent dans les villes et dans les plus petits villages de la Belgique. Que sert aux fabricants, contre de pareils débordements d'étoffes, et leur vigilance, et leur rigidité, et leur économie, et leur esprit d'ordre et de calcul. Ils ne peuvent qu'affir-

* Le transport entre pour 2½ à 3 p. c. dans ce prix de 8½ moyennant lequel les fraudeurs s'engagent à rendre en dix jours la marchandise de France à Bruxelles.

mer sans crainte que personne puisse les démentir, que de pareils prix présentent de la perte sur le prix de revient des étoffes qu'ils fabriquent et impriment.

A ceux qui leur reprochent de ne pas s'occuper assez d'exportation, tout ce qui précède peut déjà répondre ; mais qui donc pourrait méconnaître que, pour exporter avec fruit, il faut être assuré d'abord d'un certain débit sur le marché intérieur ? Le marché intérieur est donc indispensable, et pour les fabricants belges, c'est justement ce qui leur manque.

L'Industrie Cotonnière avait dans les Indes Néerlandaises un débouché que les faveurs spéciales, accordées au pavillon et aux produits des Pays-Bas, devait rendre exclusif à son profit. Tout le trop plein de la fabrication intérieure s'écoulait donc vers ces contrées, dont la consommation s'accroissait de jour en jour. Le marché intérieur venait-il à être surchargé de marchandises, soit par un excès de production, soit par une introduction surabondante de fabricants étrangers, le fabricant cessant de produire pour la consommation indigène, allait écouler à Java ce qu'il avait en magasin, sans être obligé de suspendre ses travaux. Dans le même temps le marché de la Hollande toute entière, où se trouvent 2 millions ½ de consommateurs, lui était ouvert en concurrence avec l'étranger. Quelques préférences lui étaient pourtant accordées. Aujourd'hui le débouché des Indes Orientales est perdu, celui de la Hollande se perd tous les jours, parce que nous y retrouvons comme en Belgique le trop plein, les queues de partie de la France et

de l'Angleterre ; naguère encore nous avons perdu dans le Limbourg et le Luxembourg 350,000 concitoyens et consommateurs. Voilà les faits dans toute leur vérité. Comment après cela soutenir encore que la situation actuelle de l'Industrie Cotonnière est tolérable, qu'elle est meilleure qu'en 1830. Encore une fois, MM. les Représentants, votre bon sens, votre patriotisme, se soulèveront contre d'aussi grossières erreurs. Et reportant ensuite votre pensée sur la sévérité de la politique commerciale suivie par des nations voisines, vous vous direz qu'une seule voie de salut reste à notre industrie la possession de notre marché intérieur. Vous nous le donnerez, Messieurs, en retirant aux étrangers la part que la fraude leur a jusqu'à présent laissé prendre, ou vous nous adjoindrez à un plus grand territoire.

Nous vous prions donc de nous assurer, mais de nous assurer par des moyens efficaces, ce qui est notre droit légitime, c'est-à-dire la possession du seul marché qui nous reste, ou d'y suppléer soit par une réunion douanière avec la France, soit par l'accession à la ligue commerciale allemande. C'est notre seul espoir de salut. Nous vous prions encore de vous occuper de cette situation sans retard, nos souffrances sont vives, elles durent depuis long-temps ; si contre toute attente l'impossibilité de nous secourir devait être finalement reconnue, comme dernière faveur, nous demanderions qu'on voulût bien nous le dire. Nous en profiterions pour abréger notre longue agonie, et pour en finir avec les sacrifices, avec ces luttes dans lesquelles nous dissipons à la fois notre temps et nos capitaux. Ainsi,

Messieurs, c'est encore un service que vous nous rendrez si par votre intervention nous obtenons que le Gouvernement s'explique.

Mais nous en sommes convaincus nous n'aurons pas fait un appel inutile à vos lumières pas plus qu'à votre patriotisme : vous le savez et jamais votre cœur ne l'oubliera, de l'existence de nos établissements dépendent directement plus de 10,000 familles, plus de 50,000 individus y compris les hommes, les femmes et les enfants ; ils appartiennent à toutes les provinces ; aux campagnes tout aussi bien qu'aux villes ; et vous sentirez que si ce moyen de travail leur était enlevé, il serait absolument impossible de leur en procurer un autre. Vous sentirez donc la nécessité de réunir vos efforts pour conserver à la Belgique une branche d'industrie qu'une volonté ferme sauvera, et qui n'attend qu'une resolution vigoureuse pour grandir, et s'affranchir du tribut qu'elle paie à l'étranger.

Vous jetterez les yeux sur l'importance de cette branche de fabrication, sur la somme de capitaux qu'elle emploie et sur celle qu'elle représente ; et vous vous direz que si un jour, par excès d'indifférence, on permettait que des établissements dont en 1835 votre commission centrale a estimé la production annuelle à 45 millions de francs s'écroulassent, les reproches qui viendraient atteindre les auteurs de cette catastrophe ne pourraient jamais être trop sévères. Vous ne voudrez donc pas en gardant le silence, que qui que ce soit puisse jamais essayer de faire peser l'accusation sur vous. Il vous suffira de dire que la dé-

claration faite par vous en 1835 n'a pas cessé d'exister ; vous inviterez le Gouvernement à remplir sans délai les promesses qu'il a faites ; et vous pouvez être certains, Messieurs les Représentants, que désormais les vœux que vous exprimerez en notre faveur seront d'autant mieux accueillis, qu'au Ministre qui, en plus d'une circonstance, refusa de nous entendre, a afin succédé le représentant de la ville de Gand, qui en tant d'occasions se constitua le défenseur de nos intérêts. Qu'il exécute comme ministre la politique qu'il a soutenue comme député, et l'Industrie Cotonnière sera sauvée ; elle renaîtra bientôt du milieu de ses débris.

Agréez, Messieurs les Représentants, l'expression de notre profond respect.

Les Membres de la Commission Directrice de l'Association en faveur de l'Industrie Cotonnière,

DE SMET-DE NAEYERE, *Président.*
P. ROSSEEL, *Vice-Président.*
VERHAEGHE-DE NAEYERE, *Trésorier.*

E. J. BRAECKMAN, CEUTERICKX, F. CLAES, E. COPPENS, DE COCK, PARIDAEN-VANDERWAERDEN, VAN HUFFEL, VOORTMAN, *Membres ;* BRIAVOINNE, *Secrétaire.*

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Vanden Driessche-Verstraeten.	

Certifié les signatures ci-dessus apposées sur les copies du présent mémoire déposées entre nos mains.

Le Président de la Commission-Directrice,
DE SMET-DE NAEYERÉ.

Le Secrétaire,
Briavionne.

Gand 14, Décembre, 1839.

No. IV.

EXTRAIT D'UN MÉMOIRE.

ADRESSE LE 3 OCTOBRE 1814,

AUX HAUTES PUISSANCES ASSEMBLÉES DANS LE CONGRÈS DE VIENNE,

Par MM. les Vicaires-Généraux de Gand, dans l'absence et suivant l'intention expresse de Monseigneur le Prince de Broglie, évêque de Gand.

" Depuis l'établissement de la religion protestante en divers pays de l'Europe, on ne connaît aucun peuple qui, devant être gouverné par un prince d'une religion différente de la sienne, n'ait pris auparavant toutes les précautions possibles pour mettre l'exercice libre de son culte, tous les droits *et priviléges qui y étaient attachés*, hors de toute atteinte de la part du souverain."

A l'appui de cette proposition MM. les vicaires-généraux citent plusieurs exemples choisis dans l'histoire d'Allemagne.

" Les Belges, disent-ils ensuite, sont d'autant plus fondés à solliciter des hautes puissances cet acte de justice, que :

" I. La religion luthérienne et la réformée ne sont, à proprement parler, que *tolérées* en Allemagne par les constitutions de l'empire germanique, ainsi que la religion catholique, attendu qu'il répugne au bon sens d'approuver des religions qui se contredisent. Mais dans la Belgique, la religion catholique a été constamment et authentiquement approuvée de tout temps.—Les Belges sont donc à bien plus forte raison fondés à invoquer un droit de garantie formel en faveur d'une religion qui n'a jamais cessé d'être la leur depuis leur conversion au christianisme, et dont l'éxercice *exclusif* leur a été constamment assuré par les traités les plus solennels.

" II. Tel est d'ailleurs le véritable intérêt de S. A. R. le prince d'Orange ; car, on ne peut le dissimuler, une assez longue expérience a prouvé combien les Belges sont attachés à leur religion et en même temps très chatouilleux sur cet article.... Dès le règne de Marie-Thérèse ils eurent à se plaindre plusieurs fois de l'influence de la philosophie moderne sur les mesures de l'administration. On sait que Joseph II, n'ayant plus gardé de mesure, employa vainement des voies d'autorité pour obliger les Belges à adopter ses nouveaux plans *inconciliables avec l'indépendance de la jurisdiction ecclésiastique, et qu'après une assez longue lutte ils en vinrent enfin jusqu'à secouer ouvertement le joug.* Un prince plus puissant et plus redoutable ne réussit pas mieux à

subjuguer leurs esprits. La terreur de son nom et la multitude de ses troupes aguerries maintinrent les Belges dans la dure oppression ; mais il ne parvint jamais à leur faire recevoir les institutions impériales, celles de l'université, le catéchisme de l'empire, ni même les quatre articles du clergé de France.... On ne peut nier que S. A. R. le prince d'Orange ne réunisse en sa personne toutes les qualités propres à lui concilier les cœurs de ses nouveaux sujets. Mais les qualités les plus distinguées et les plus aimables d'un souverain ne sauraient être pour le peuple qu'il doit gouverner, une garantie suffisante de la conservation de ses droits en matière de religion. Il n'est pas impossible que ses successeurs ne soient pas aussi favorablement disposés que lui. D'ailleurs les principaux dépositaires de son autorité, ne peuvent-ils pas exercer sur l'esprit du prince une influence très pernicieuse aux vrais intérêts de la religion ?.... La plupart des hommes d'état n'attachent plus, de nos jours, au maintien de la religion de leur pays la même importance qu'on y attachait autrefois.... Au lieu de *se borner à protéger la religion, à faire exécuter les lois de l'église, à punir les actes extérieurs nuisibles à la société religieuse,* ils s'immiscent témérairement dans les affaires de la religion.

Le véritable intérêt de S. A. R. le prince d'Orange est donc qu'un pacte inaugural assure aux peuples de la Belgique la conservation de leur religion, *dans toute l'étendue de leurs anciens pactes inauguraux.*

III. " C'est aussi l'intérêt de l'Europe.... Il importe infiniment au succès du nouveau système politique, que la

Belgique soit aussi tranquille, aussi heureuse qu'elle peut l'être, et que par conséquent on ne laisse point germer dans l'esprit des habitants des semences de défiance, de division *et de trouble, dont il serait un jour extrêmement difficile d'arrêter le funeste développement,* si l'on ne pourvoit d'avance à la stabilité inaltérable de l'état de la religion, *tel qu'il existait autrefois.* Pour cet effet, il entrerait dans les plans d'une saine politique *de rétablir dans ces provinces les anciennes constitutions.... nous ne pouvons calculer les résultats d'un autre système ;* mais si l'on ne jugeait pas à propos de rendre à la Belgique ses antiques et vénérables institutions,.... nous supplions les hautes puissances assemblées dans le congrès de Vienne, de stipuler dans le traité définitif de cession de ces provinces à S. A. R. le prince d'Orange, les articles suivants de garantie en faveur de notre sainte religion :

" 1° *Tous les articles* des anciens pactes inauguraux, constitutions, chartes, etc. seront maintenus en ce qui concerne, le libre exercice, les *droits, priviléges, exemptions, prérogatives,* de la religion catholique...., *des évêques, prélats, chapitres, avec cette exception, que le prince souverain et son auguste famille seront libres de professer leur religion et d'en exercer le culte dans leurs palais, chateaux et maisons royales,* où les seigneurs de sa cour auront des chapelles et des ministres de leur religion, *sans qu'il soit permis d'ériger des temples hors de l'enceinte de ces palais, sous quelque prétexte que ce soit.*

" 2° Les affaires ecclésiastiques resteront en mains des autorités spirituelles, et ce sera aux autorités ecclésiastiques

que l'on devra s'adresser pour tout ce qui tient à la religion, sauf à recourir dans les affaires mixtes au conseil d'état.

" 3° Le conseil d'état ne sera composé *que de catholiques* et il sera extrêmement important, pour ne pas dire nécessaire, qu'il s'y trouve au moins deux évêques.

" 4° La nonciature sera rétablie à Bruxelles. Le *conseil d'état traitera seul avec le nonce,* au nom du souverain, des affaires ecclésiastiques dont ce prélat devra connaître, la nomination des évêques, etc.

" 5° Il y aura un nouveau concordat avec le St. Siége. .

" 6° Il est absolument nécessaire que la dotation du clergé soit irrévocablement fixée, et qu'elle soit indépendante de l'autorité civile. *Pour cet effet il suffirait de rétablir la dîme.*"—En revanche la contribution foncière pourrait être diminuée d'un cinquième, et la dîme imposée d'un cinquième.

" 7° L'université de Louvian sera rétablie....

" 8° L'entier rétablissement de la religion catholique avec tous les droits et prérogatives y attachés, suppose la liberté donnée aux corporations religieuses de se réunir et de vivre suivant leur vocation. Un des plus excellents moyens, et peut-être le seul qui existe aujourd'hui, d'assurer aux jeunes gens une éducation qui réunit tout à la fois l'esprit de la religion et les talents les plus éminents, serait de *rétablir les jésuites dans la Belgique.*"

No. V.

EXTRAIT DU JUGEMENT DOCTRINAL

DES

ÉVEQUES DU ROYAUME DES PAYS-BAS, SUR LE SERMENT PRESCRIT PAR LA NOUVELLE CONSTITUTION.

" C'est pour remplir un des devoirs les plus essentiels de l'épiscopat, pour nous acquitter envers les peuples sur lesquels le St.-Esprit nous a établis évêques pour gouverner l'Eglise de Dieu (Act. 20, v. 28), de l'obligation qui nous a été strictement imposée par l'Eglise, que nous avons jugé nécessaire de déclarer qu'*aucun de nos diocésains respectifs ne peut, sans trahir les plus chers intérêts de la religion, sans se rendre coupable d'un grand crime, prêter les différents serments prescrits par la constitution.*"

Les signataires du jugement doctrinal indiquent ensuite les principes qui, selon eux, " sont contraires à l'esprit et aux maximes de la religion." Ce sont les art. 190-196, 226, 143, et le 2e article additionnel. Ils observent à légard de ces dispositions:

" (ART. 190 et 191) 1° Jurer de maintenir la liberté

des opinions religieuses et la protection égale à tous les cultes, qu'est-ce autre chose que de maintenir, de protéger l'erreur comme la vérité ?

" (ART. 192) 2° Jurer de maintenir l'observation d'une loi *qui rend tous les sujets du roi, de quelque croyance religieuse qu'ils soient, habiles à posséder toutes les dignités et emplois quelconques, ce serait justifier d'avance et sanctionner les mesures qui pourront être prises pour confier les intérêts de notre sainte religion dans ces provinces, si éminemment catholiques, à des fonctionnaires protestants.*

" (ART. 193) 3° Jurer d'observer et de maintenir une loi *qui met dans les mains du gouvernement le pouvoir de faire cesser l'exercice de la religion catholique, lorsqu'il a été l'occasion* d'un trouble, n'est-ce pas faire dépendre à l'avenir, autant qu'il est *en soi, l'exercice de notre sainte religion de la volonté de ses ennemis et de la malice des méchants ?*

" (ART. 196) 4° Jurer d'observer et de maintenir une loi qui *suppose* (!) *que l'église catholique est soumise aux lois de l'état, c'est manifestement s'exposer à coopérer à l'asservissement de l'église.* C'est au fond soumettre, suivant l'expression de notre saint-père le pape, la puissance spirituelle aux caprices de la puissance séculière. (Bulle du 10 Juin, 1809.)

" (ART. 226) 5° Jurer d'observer et de maintenir une loi qui attribue au souverain, *et à un souverain qui ne professe pas notre sainte religion, le droit de régler l'instruction publique, les écoles supérieures, moyennes et inférieures,* c'est lui livrer à discrétion l'enseignement public, *c'est trahir honteusement les plus chers intérêts de l'église catholique.*

" (ART. 143) 6° Jurer d'observer et de maintenir une loi qui autorise les états provinciaux à exécuter les lois relatives à la protection des différents cultes, à leur exercice extérieur, à l'instruction publique, n'est-ce pas confier les plus grands intérêts de la religion à des laïques ?.... *à dieu ne plaise qu'aucun enfant de l'église concoure par un serment solennel à maintenir un tel ordre de choses !*

" (ART. 2 addit.) 7° Jurer de regarder comme obligatoires, jusqu'à ce qu'il y soit autrement pourvu, et de maintenir toutes les lois qui sont maintenant en vigueur, ce serait coopérer évidemment à l'exécution éventuelle de plusieurs lois anti-catholiques et manifestement injustes que renferment les codes civil et penal de l'ancien gouvernement français, et notamment de celles qui permettent le divorce, qui autorisent légalement des unions incestueuses condamnées par l'Eglise, qui décernent contre les ministres de l'Evangile, fidèles à leur devoir, les peines les plus sévères (?) etc. Toutes lois qu'un vrai catholique doit avoir en horreur.

" Il est encore d'autres articles qu'un véritable enfant de l'Eglise ne peut s'engager, par serment, à observer et à maintenir.. .; *tel est en particulier le* 227^{me} *qui autorise la liberté de la presse.*

" Nous avons dû considérer ces articles, en eux-mêmes, et sous le rapport des funestes effets qui *doivent*, tôt ou tard, résulter de leur exécution. Le caractère connu de notre auguste monarque nous donne sans doute un juste motif d'espérer qu'il daignera, par sa royale sollicitude, en

preserver autant que possible ses provinces catholiques, qui forment la majeure partie du nouveau royaume; *mais des qu'une loi humaine est intrinséquement mauvaise et opposée à la loi divine et aux lois de l'église, on ne peut, sous aucun prétexte, s'engager d'y obéir.*"

Signé, "LE PRINCE MAURICE DE BROGLIE, évêque. de Gand.

"CHARLES FRANÇOIS JOSEPH PISANI DE LA GAUDE, évêque de Namur.

"FRANÇOIS JOSEPH, évêque de Tournai.

"J'adhère au *jugement doctrinal* ci-dessus porté par mes seigneurs les évêques du royaume des Pays-Bas:

"J. FORGEUR, vicaire-général de l'archevêché de Malines.

"J'y adhère également:

"J.-A. BARRETT, vicaire-général, cap. de Liège."

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